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Vol. CXXXVIII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1934 No. 3596

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States; to Canada, $5.50; and to other foreign countries, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: NATION, New York. Muriel C. Gray, Advertising Manager. British Agent, Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London W. C. 1, England.

EVIDENTLY the Administration has been inspired to get behind the Wagner Labor Disputes bill in its new form by the hope of creating a preventive which would nip the summer growth of strikes in the bud. What the bill gives to the trade unions is hardly specific enough, and certainly not substantial enough, to justify them in accepting that preventive. It does not outlaw the company union; it does not establish majority rule; it does not require union recognition where the union is representative of the majority of the workers; indeed, it does not impose upon the employer any more meaningful obligation to bargain collectively than did the Recovery Act. What is equally dangerous, it extends implicit, left-handed recognition to employee-representation plans—the device used by employers first in 1919 and again in 1933 to forestall the progress of the trade-union movement. Section 3 specifies four unfair labor practices, which, in substance, repeat the vague and equivocal guaranties of Section 7-a of the NIRA. Although the employer is forbidden to "dominate" any labor organization, he is no longer forbidden to initiate, foster, or promote a company union. The former list of unfair labor practices, in contrast, was extensive, detailed, and specific. Although Section 3 in the new draft contains language intended to validate closed-shop contracts between trade unions and employers, the language is so uncertain that it would be conceivable that an employer might use it to justify a closed-shop contract with a company union. Section 10 conveys to the new board authority to determine the identity of the individuals or labor organizations authorized to bargain collectively. Should the board use the authority, it may, if it sees fit, determine the representatives for collective bargaining according to majority rule. But the board may alternatively apply the principle of proportional representation. Finally, once the board has conducted its inquiry and certified the representatives, the matter will end. For it is no longer specified as an unfair labor practice for the employer to refuse to recognize the representatives, to abstain from negotiating with them, or to fail to exert reasonable efforts to consummate an agreement.

INSTEAD OF ASSERTING in plain language that the right to strike shall remain intact, as the old bill did, the new bill engages in dangerous circumlocution. Nothing in the act shall be so construed, Section 14 says, as "to make illegal the failure or refusal of any employee individually, or of any number of employees collectively, to render labor or service." Is this intended to be anything more than a restatement of the prohibition against involuntary servitude? If it is intended to be more, if it is intended to safeguard the right to strike, then the change from the blunt language of the original version is suspicious, to say the least. Might not the failure to safeguard the right to strike in so many words be construed by the courts to outlaw militant labor action? This is not an idle fear, since the bill declares it to be the policy of the United States to "provide for the general welfare by establishing agencies for the peaceful settlement of labor disputes." In supporting the original Wagner bill, labor was asking for a staff. The Senate committee has suggested something which might easily be used as a scourge.

NOTHING COULD PROVIDE a better example of the wrong way to get the government into business than the bill recently passed by an overwhelming vote in the House providing for direct loans to small industries by the Federal Reserve banks and the RFC. The reserve banks are authorized to lend to small industries for periods of not more than five years a total amount equal to their surplus as of July 1, 1934; this should come to about $140,000,000. The RFC itself is authorized to make similar loans up to a total of $300,000,000. The effect of this measure must be merely to risk public funds in loans that are for the most part too questionable to tempt private capital. Under the terms of the bill the government will have the privilege of providing capital for firms whose policies it cannot control; and it is to provide it apparently regardless of whether or not the particular firm or industry being financed serves any genuine social need. Even if we make the dubious assumption that the distribution of the funds will be entirely free of political pressure, the principles behind the measure are thoroughly bad. Five-year loans, no matter how sound, are, to begin with, not properly banking loans at all, and the Federal Reserve banks should in no case be called upon to make them.

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They are capital loans, and ought to be provided through the capital market. If such loans are not now being provided in sufficient amount, it is certainly not through lack of surplus banking funds or potential private long-term capital. Even if we grant that commercial banks and private capital are now unduly timid, the history of previous depressions and panics shows that as soon as signs of a genuine and prolonged revival become clear new capital and increased loans do not lag very far behind. The new bill shows how a principle, unsound to begin with, may be more and more dangerously extended. There was an excuse for the RFC as an emergency institution to make loans on sound collateral to help solvent commercial banks to keep liquid. It should never have had any function beyond that.

GOVERNOR BLANTON WINSHIP has yielded to the pressure of big-business interests in Puerto Rico and has vetoed the workmen's compensation act, the draft of which he had himself submitted to the insular legislature with an urgent request for its approval. The new act is imperative because of the failure of the existing law to protect the workers. The Governor's yielding, apart from its manifestation of weakness and indecision, suggests a regretable subservience to the forces which on the island, as on the continent, are fighting the Roosevelt policies tooth and nail. General Winship's reactionary attitude was previously manifested by his support of the great sugar corporations in his declared opposition to the Jones-Costigan bill, which, as far as Puerto Rico is concerned, is the first move in the President's farsighted plan for the island's rehabilitation. This program, indorsed whole-heartedly by the Liberal Party, has properly begun with an effort to reconstruct the sugar economy which has increasingly rendered our Caribbean colony a fief of absentee landlords. The Jones-Costigan bill is merely a preliminary step which facilitates the withdrawal of marginal cane lands from production and opens the way to the investment in small homesteads, and possibly in publicly owned "yardstick" sugar *centrales,* of the proceeds of the processing tax. The Presidential program, now being worked out in Washington with the collaboration of a committee of highly qualified Puerto Rican social scientists and technicians —Carlos Chardon, Fernandez Garcia, and Menendez Ramos —aims to restore lands to the individual native growers who have gradually been squeezed out, and to enable farmers and farm laborers to receive a full return on the proceeds of their toil. It would be unfortunate if the first prospect of social and economic reconstruction since the beginning of the American regime were to be blighted by lack of executive understanding. The act creating the Tennessee Valley Authority wisely required that its board should be composed of "persons who profess a belief" in the project's "feasibility and wisdom." In Puerto Rico, as at home, it should be evident that the success of the New Deal depends largely on the ability and sympathy of those intrusted with its execution.

MR. LASKI, in his admirable London letter published this week in *The Nation,* discusses the anti-sedition bill which is now being debated in Parliament. It is possible that American readers do not quite realize the implications of that bill. Those of us who are still interested in freedom of speech and of the press, not to mention the right to publish books and pamphlets which are frankly critical of the existing government, would do well to examine the British measure very closely. Three amendments have already been accepted which temper slightly its most vicious portions. These provide for trial by jury at the request of the accused, declare that attempts at what the court may term sedition must be done "maliciously and advisedly," and include "with intent to commit . . . an offense" in the clause dealing with persons found in possession of seditious documents. The London *New Statesman and Nation,* in discussing the bill even in its revised form, concludes, however, that if it is passed it will in all likelihood result in the complete suppression of books and pamphlets which are in the left-wing category. "Possibly any frank Socialist book, probably any Marxist book, certainly any Tolstoyan book, would be doubtfully lawful" and any publisher would hesitate to issue it, particularly if it was in cheap and accessible form. This is evidently a blow to traditional British liberties the like of which has not been threatened in peace time for centuries. It might well furnish a pattern which zealous American patriots would seek to imitate. And it shows, as no amount of black-shirt mouthings in the Albert Hall can show, how the British fascist wind is blowing.

PRELIMINARY REPORTS from 140 cities, representing 64 per cent of the country's urban population, show clearly what happened when the President, under pressure from the right, decided to discontinue the CWA at the end of March. The number of families and single persons who had to be given relief in April increased as much as 38 per cent, while relief expenditures from all public funds had to be increased 46 per cent. Even if we compare the April figures with those of last November, as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration suggests, the number of cases receiving relief in leading cities increased 11 per cent. Hence the new desperation which marks the wave of strikes now spreading over the country. New York City had a taste of this desperation last Saturday when a delegation, including white-collar workers, representing the United Action Committee of One Hundred, was refused an interview by Stanley H. Howe, Deputy Welfare Commissioner, on the technical ground that the allowed quota of five delegations per week had been exhausted. The committee tried to enter the building and police and detectives went into action with extraordinary brutality, the delegation and their supporters fighting back futilely with the staves of their placards. Three men were taken to hospitals and thirteen were arrested. When arraigned Sunday morning nine of these were charged with felonious assault, for which the penalty is from three to ten years. But the crowning outrage came when Magistrate McGee ordered the courtroom cleared and James and Rose Lechay, on reaching the sidewalk, failed to move fast enough to satisfy the police. Lechay and his wife were beaten and kicked until the reporters shouted in protest and started up the stairs to complain to the desk sergeant. Another demonstration is expected in a few days, and unless Mayor LaGuardia intervenes promptly, another exhibition of police sadism is in prospect.

THE SENTENCE of from eighteen to twenty years imposed on Angelo Herndon in Atlanta for an attempt at inciting to insurrection by having seditious literature in his possession has just been upheld by the Georgia Supreme

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Court. The statute under which Herndon was convicted, which has not been invoked previously for decades, provides for the death sentence as the maximum punishment, but in Herndon's case the jury recommended "mercy." Herndon was arrested while in the act of opening a post-office box which he acknowledged as his, and in his room after his arrest were found piles of documents, many of them in the original wrappers, which the court termed seditious. The case rests so far, therefore, merely on the possession of such documents, and the defense has lain in the contention that mere possession does not in fact constitute the act of inciting to insurrection. The next move will be application for a writ of certiorari to take the case to the United States Supreme Court, where the constitutionality both of the statute itself and of the Georgia court's application of it will be fought. As in the Scottsboro case, the appeal in which was argued on May 25 before the Alabama Supreme Court, the International Labor Defense has conducted the defense, and it deserves the interest and support of all those who do not wish to see a man spend two decades in prison on a trumped-up charge which covers the real offense of daring, as Herndon did, to attempt to organize his fellow-workers, white and black, in protest against intolerable conditions.

AMONG THE BILLS which it is to be hoped Congress will get around to before it adjourns is the Wagner-Costigan anti-lynching bill. However, before the measure comes to a vote, the clause limiting federal intervention to cases in which the victims are taken from the "custody of any peace officer" should obviously be eliminated. The record of lynchings from 1918 to 1934 shows that out of 559 persons lynched, only 251 were taken from peace officers—that is, sheriffs, constables, policemen. The majority of lynchings are conducted by a crowd of "unknown persons," among whom no peace officer admittedly figures. If a dozen men take a Negro suspected of a crime from his home at night and hang him before morning, all the necessary requirements for a lynching are present, but under the present wording of the proposed federal anti-lynching law, the federal government could not intervene. President Roosevelt is reported to be lukewarm in his feeling about the bill, because he cannot quite convince himself that the fine which it is proposed to lay on any county in which a lynching takes place is a proper or workable penalty. It may be worth while respectfully to remind him that the intent of the bill is largely preventive rather than punitive, and that the threat of a considerable fine in a county which is not over-blessed with financial resources would probably do more to inspire the officers of the law with zeal to prevent a lynching there than anything else would—unless it be the other provision in the bill which authorizes the federal prosecution of State officials who refuse or fail to act against lynchers.

WHETHER AMERICAN NEWSPAPERMEN have arrived at even a modest degree of class consciousness is being decided at the convention of the Newspaper Guild of America, at St. Paul, as this issue is being read. The chief point of discussion for the convention is whether the guild should unionize, either by affiliation with the American Federation of Labor or independently, or whether it should continue in a vague, hit-or-miss fashion to represent an ill-defined professionalism. In New York, Philadelphia, and other large cities the left-wing element is articulate and demands unionization as the newspaperman's only defense against the uncertainties of his trade. But there are many guild members, schooled on anti-labor newspapers, who oppose such a move, partly through their training, partly through fear it will not work, but largely because of the city-room myth that reporters and rewrite men and copy readers are professional people and not members of the working class.

ALTHOUGH President Roosevelt on February 19 last sent to the Senate the convention for the protection of literary and artistic works which every civilized nation has signed except China, Russia, and ourselves, after all these months the treaty is not yet ratified. Entry of the United States into the Copyright Union has been sought for more than twenty years as the best possible way to benefit our authors, artists, composers, and dramatists. No fewer than twenty-one learned and scientific associations have approved it, yet the treaty still hangs fire in the Senate. Although numerous hearings have been held on it by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, it has now been referred by that committee to a subcommittee of three headed by Senator Duffy of Wisconsin, and it is reported that the subcommittee is now on the point of beginning once more to take testimony and hear those who favor and are opposed, just as if there were not already hundreds of pages of verbatim testimony available. We confess that the delay is as maddening as it is inexplicable. It is a most flagrant example of our refusal to cooperate with the rest of the world in what is simply a matter of international justice and good-will. The chief protests seem to come from labor unions who insist that if we ratify the convention a lot of books will be printed abroad that would otherwise be printed here—the old damnable protective-tariff principle. The only thing to do now is for the Senate to ratify the treaty at once and if necessary to defer until later the framing of the enabling act to carry out the provisions of the treaty, which is the excuse for the new hearings and the present indefensible delay.

JOSEPHINE ROCHE has accepted the Democratic nomination for Governor of Colorado, and the news of the candidacy of this remarkable woman will be hailed with delight by liberals and true friends of labor all over the country. For Miss Roche has not only shown great public spirit always; she has set an inspiring example of how seriously the inheritor of a great property should take his responsibility. On becoming majority owner of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, she at once flung herself into the task of improving the relationship of the management with its workers. The first thing she did was to urge her employees to unionize, with astounding results in their increased happiness and efficiency. This square dealing and complete democratic cooperation between the officers of the company and the miners have resulted in a greater proportionate reward for each, notably in more working days per annum for the men than have been obtainable by any other miners in Colorado. The demand for Miss Roche's candidacy was of spontaneous origin, being first voiced by the editor of a newspaper in the southwestern part of the State. It was immediately taken up by other editors, with the result that Miss Roche has consented to run. Colorado will be fortunate if it has as chief executive so just and farsighted a person.

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The New Tariff Policy

DESPITE the combined oratorical efforts of Huey P. Long and an embittered group of diehard Republicans, the reciprocal tariff bill is expected to pass the Senate within the next few days. Armed with the extraordinary powers conferred by this bill, the Administration will be in a position to carry out the traditional Democratic tariff policy by a vigorous, if somewhat belated, flank attack on the ramparts of protectionism. A direct assault is clearly beyond the realm of practicability. By devious means vested interests have seen to it that the majority of voters are persuaded that a high tariff is necessary to maintain the American standard of living in the face of foreign competition. That practically all economists hold an opposite view has been of little importance as long as these interests have been in a position to bring direct pressure on Congress. An attempt at general tariff revision would probably have led to a consolidation of the protectionist forces, vote-trading, and an ultimate raising of duties without regard for economic considerations. Under these circumstances the only hope of liberalizing American commercial policy lies in the possibility of arousing the groups that are dependent on foreign markets—particularly the farmers of the South and West—to see the necessity of tariff reduction if they are to regain a substantial portion of the $3,500,000,000 in exports which has been lost since 1929.

The criteria upon which the government may be expected to base its tariff concessions have been set forth on several occasions, although mention of specific articles has always been carefully avoided for fear of provoking premature opposition from organized business interests. Attention will doubtless be centered on the reduction of duties which most clearly lack economic justification. A recent investigation by the Tariff Commission revealed, for example, that there were 1,021 dutiable articles imports of which in 1931 formed less than 5 per cent of domestic consumption. In the case of several hundred of these, imports were less than 1 per cent of the amount produced in the United States. Yet many of these products bear duties of from 50 to 150 per cent! Notwithstanding the flood of cheap foreign products which Mr. Hearst declares to be threatening this country, it was discovered that for a substantial proportion of the items on the American tariff list imports have declined considerably more than domestic production in recent years. While a mere reduction in the value of imports since 1929 is of little significance in view of the general drop in world prices, it is clear that where imports have fallen more than consumption, the tariff is serving to restrict trade and is higher than can be justified on grounds of protecting the existing status of American industries. Some reduction also seems to be called for in the case of duties which have been in effect for many years without stimulating a substantial production of the protected commodity within the boundaries of this country.

By no means all the duties suggested above, however, are likely to be reduced in reciprocal agreements. Such factors as an industry's importance to national defense, the extent of its concentration, the number of workers employed, and its relative wage level will unquestionably be taken into consideration in determining the policy to be adopted in any particular instance. The Senate amendment guaranteeing a hearing to an industry before the duty on its products can be reduced will not only prevent hasty action, but will probably serve to prevent many desirable adjustments.

In our general satisfaction with the prospect of a long-needed change in American tariff policy, we should not lose sight, moreover, of the grave dangers involved in the bargaining method. Past experience with this technique in this country or in Europe has been by no means reassuring. The practice of bargaining with individual countries has resulted in special arrangements based on immediate considerations and has made the adoption of a consistent and continuous tariff policy virtually impossible. Instead of contributing to a reduction of trade barriers, bilateral negotiations have frequently led nations to raise duties in advance for bargaining purposes. Similarly, efforts to strike a good bargain may lead to an intensification rather than a diminution of trade rivalries. The present Anglo-Japanese controversy illustrates the danger of placing national governments in a position where they must support domestic trade groups in their struggle for world markets. By laying undue emphasis on the desirability of expanding exports, while granting tariff concessions only as a last resort, the bargaining psychology might easily accentuate the prevailing misconceptions regarding commercial policy and cause the United States to repeat the errors of the 1919-29 period. Even today the American public has only partially grasped the fact that a creditor nation can benefit from its position only by maintaining an import surplus of goods and services.

Needless to say, the opponents of the President's tariff program have not been nearly so much exercised over the prospects of a trade war as over the possibility that the profits of certain American enterprises might be curtailed. They reason not illogically that if imports are to be greatly increased, certain domestic producers are bound to be affected. The elimination or reduction of the tariff on products which the United States normally exports, for example, would be painless to the American producer but would be valueless to the countries seeking reciprocal agreements. Similarly, a 50 per cent reduction in the duty on commodities, such as olive oil, which we do not produce in this country in large amounts would not be likely to increase their consumption sufficiently to permit us to dispose of our huge agricultural surpluses. If the United States wishes to obtain new markets for its export products, it must be willing to make substantial concessions, even though they be painful.

It is clear that a new principle as well as a new technique is needed if reciprocity is to succeed where previous experiments of this type have failed. The Administration apparently believes that a rigorous holding to the most-favored-nation clause will make it possible to avoid the worst features of bargaining. Retention of this clause may restrict negotiations to some extent, but it should have the effect of assuring an increase rather than merely a diversion of trade. As a leading creditor, possessing one of the highest tariffs in the world, the United States is in an unusually favorable posi-

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tion to sponsor a new type of bilateral agreement, based on the traditional American principle of equal treatment. Whether we shall shoulder this responsibility, and thus stem the world-wide drift toward economic nationalism and war, depends upon the courage of the Administration in making concessions despite the injured outcries of powerful American industrial interests.

The Strike Tide Rises

THE spilling of blood brought the labor crisis to the front pages of the newspapers, but the labor press for weeks has presented a mosaic of unrest unparalleled since 1919. In every part of the country, in every branch of industry, workers by hundreds, by thousands, and by tens of thousands have been laying down their tools in strikes that have been overwhelmingly supported by the rank and file, in most cases involving American Federation of Labor unions. Shipping on the Pacific Coast has been virtually at a standstill as the result of a strike which began among longshoremen and has gradually spread throughout the ranks of waterfront labor until it extends around the entire seacoast. In Minneapolis the National Guard has been withdrawn and 5,000 truck drivers have gone back to work after a strike which tied up the city market-place for eleven days and led to pitched battles between strike sympathizers and 1,500 special police in which one man was killed and hundreds injured. In Toledo a settlement is still to be made in a strike of some 2,000 electric workers in the automobile industry, who were joined in their picketing by thousands of members of the Unemployed League, a national organization which has 100,000 members in Ohio and which for months has not only organized strikes among workers on relief but has actually called employed workers out in the fight for better conditions.

But these are only the more dramatic of the strikes, involving both employed and unemployed workers, which are in progress from one end of the country to the other: in numbers ranging from 200 to 15,000, miners, automobile workers, printers, carpenters, tug firemen, shirtmakers, paper-hangers, textile operatives, painters, silk workers, airplane workers, and grave-diggers are striking for better pay, shorter hours, less speeding up, regularization of employment—and recognition of the union. And this last, recognition of the union with its implication of the closed shop, is the central issue in the rising wave of unrest which may culminate in a strike of steel workers in June.

Essentially the demand for recognition is a demand for a share of the power to decide conditions of employment. The promise of such power for labor seemed to be implied in Section 7-a of the NIRA. That pledge was ignored in the automobile settlement. Moreover, the regional labor boards, presumably created to enforce Section 7-a, have in many cases operated to break strikes rather than to mediate them. By sending strikers back to work pending settlements they have blunted the workers' only bargaining power, their refusal to work.

The Administration can prevent bitter class warfare only by removing its cause, which lies in the maldistribution of wealth. Mr. Roosevelt's way of putting it is that mass purchasing power must be increased. The attempt to achieve this through the voluntary cooperation of industry has failed. Unless Mr. Roosevelt is now prepared to use his power to license business, he must support labor in its attempt, through union recognition and the closed shop, to increase employment and wages.

The Weirton case and the automobile settlement demonstrated, if demonstration were needed, how fiercely industry will fight the attempt on the part of labor to gain power. Alfred P. Sloan, head of General Motors, in his report for 1933, indicated the tack industry will follow:

> Unfortunately [there] appears to be looming the specter of the greatest monopoly that ever existed in any country in the world—the closed shop. . . . Does not the record of American industry, with its freedom and independence as developed through the mutual confidence of management and labor in the automobile industry—providing for the American workman the highest standard of living in the world—justify a decision in favor of the open shop?

The answer lies in the same report by Mr. Sloan, in the course of which he revealed these facts: The net profits of General Motors increased from $164,979 in 1932 to $83,213,675 in 1933 (under the NRA). The number of employees increased from 116,152 to 137,764 and pay rolls from $143,255,070 to $171,184,315. In other words, the annual wage of a worker in the most efficient of American industries in 1932 was approximately $1,230, or $270 below the decent subsistence level of $1,500. In 1933, when profits were 400 times as large as in 1932, the annual wage of the worker with the highest standard of living in the world was approximately $1,240, or $260 below the decent subsistence level.

Between the monopoly which demonstrably exists in the major industries of America and the "labor monopoly" which troubles Mr. Sloan there can be no question which the Administration should favor with its great influence if it has truly at heart the welfare of the American people.

Arthur Warner

THE NATION announces with deep sorrow the death on May 23 of Arthur Warner, who for many years, except for brief intervals devoted to other work, has been a member of the staff. He died suddenly—following an operation—in the midst of plans for future work and adventure which included a trip to Russia in the late summer. His loss to *The Nation* and to his friends on *The Nation* cannot be measured. Throughout the years of his association with the paper he brought into the lives of all of us a quality almost too imponderable to describe and at the same time too potent to be mistaken. Every person ever associated with *The Nation* will understand the reality of this influence. It seems important, now that he is dead, to try to find the necessary words to describe his particular quality.

Arthur Warner was as steady as a lighthouse in his devotion both to principles and to people. He never appeared to be tempted to forget or trample on either one through any fanatical preoccupation with the other. He was as certain in the direction of his feelings as of his thoughts; they moved together like beams from a single light. He was a fixed point in a wavering world; and yet he maintained his bal-

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ance and clarity without withdrawing from the conflicts of his time, without allowing himself the luxury of detachment. Where most people in the midst of the whirlpool of contemporary events and ideas are deflected, swept in footless circles, forgetting one cause to forward another, dropping one subject because ten others have crowded it out, Arthur Warner was serenely constant. One of the first editors to write about the crime against Sacco and Vanzetti, he never lost touch with that slowly mounting tragedy, even when other publications and writers grew bored or despairing. And only the other day he turned in an editorial comment on Tom Mooney, saying: "I think it's time we got round to this again." He did not forget even those friends whom he never knew! And his dependability was no mere journalistic steadiness; it was an emotion of stubborn, unchanging loyalty.

If ever an editor and a radical wrote without malice, it was Arthur Warner. His opinions were decided, outspoken, and strongly held, but they concealed no inner poison. He was completely ready to respect the opposition of honest antagonists—to oppose them and like them. He never identified ideas with moral qualities. He was willing, mentally and emotionally, to let live—a virtue not as common as it should be among those who cling to their own beliefs with a strong faith.

But none of these characteristics reveals the source of the pervasive effect of Arthur Warner's personality. Not even if we add that he was lovable and witty and bristling with amiable eccentricities. Perhaps his value as an editor and fellow-worker can be traced chiefly to a quality of mental distinction which found its expression in almost every word he ever wrote—even to the titles of his articles. Arthur Warner was, in simple fact, unique. And if it be remarked that each of us is also unique, it can at least be asserted that distinction is of varying degrees and that Arthur Warner's was of the highest. He had without doubt one of the most individual minds on the staff of *The Nation* in all the period in which he worked there. Other editors have been as well informed and as wise; others have written with equal power; none has been so nicely, unmistakably differentiated. Arthur Warner was a radical and a newspaperman and an editor, but he never wrote primarily as one or all of these; he wrote in his own person. Every article was an exposure, an unconscious, wholly unpremeditated exposure, of his personality. And everyone who has written professionally will understand the measure of that praise. To avoid all the possible stereotypes and still to write words that will fit into the complex mosaic—the collective pattern—of a weekly journal, is a quality seldom demonstrated so consistently and so successfully.

And the personality thus exposed was a rare combination of feeling that never spilled over into bombast or sentimental nonsense, and earnestness that never became heavy or pompous, and whimsicality that was never without edge, and humor that was truly funny. His many minor prejudices were ardent; his true ardors were measured and tempered by wisdom. To have worked with Arthur Warner has been a deep satisfaction. We may hope that at least a part of his humane and civilized outlook, his cheerful pessimism and acceptance of the chances of fate, has remained with us to inform our own vision and to reconcile us to the life that he has left.

Towers for Looking

WE generally receive and read with interest the *Pen and Hammer,* a bulletin published in the interests of "proletarian" literature. The current issue pours scorn upon those philosophers by profession who seek "philosophical serenity" and then, somewhat inconsistently we think, pours even greater scorn upon Josiah Royce and others who abandoned their immediate concerns to beat the drums for the Allied army during the late war. The naive implication seems to be that the intellectual is to concern himself with public affairs only when he happens to be on a particular side, but we wonder if that is not expecting a bit too much. You may ask of the philosopher that he remain philosophical, but if you insist that he take up some cudgel, then you can hardly be surprised if he sometimes hits your friends over the head.

Of all the poets and painters, philosophers and novelists, who foamed patriotically at the mouth when the Lusitania was sunk, at least nine-tenths now regret that they said what they said or felt what they felt. Looking back upon those hysterical days they wonder at themselves and realize too late that a little of the "philosophical serenity" which they then scorned so heartily might have served both them and civilization very well indeed. There was passion enough and intolerance enough without their contribution. The simple citizen could be depended upon then as he can be depended upon now to supply all the partisanship necessary even for the conduct of a successful war. But there was a sad lack of that sense of fair play, that reasonable perspective, even of that simple decency, which it is the special function of the intellectual to encourage.

Not all the repentant fire-eaters have become pacifists or Marxians. Many of them doubtless still believe that the war had to be fought and won. But they have come to realize that they did not play the part they might have played, that they repudiated the very qualities which they alone possessed and which, to say the least, might have helped to make the whole episode less shameful. The war would have been won without their patriotism, but had they played their rightful part it could not be said, as now it may be, that the nations as a whole went mad.

Sometimes it is assumed that the intellectual who does not shut himself up in an ivory tower must necessarily cultivate that blind partisanship which is both appropriate and necessary to the soldier. But towers are not really built to be shut up in; they are built to be looked out from, and they afford a perspective from which it is sometimes possible to get a truer view of things than any to be obtained in the midst of the battle. Your genuine philosopher is not averse to towers, but he uses them for their legitimate purpose, and when the smoke has cleared away, civilization is generally glad to know that someone was perched upon that point of vantage. He does not believe that his function is the only one. He may even feel that the world, still being what it is, has as much need of partisanship as it has of detachment, but he retains a certain respect for his own function. The pen is not mightier than the sword but it is very likely to be righter, and there is a place for rightness even when it happens to be as ineffectual as it usually is.

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Issues and Men

The Latest Saviors of the Republic

THE Republicans are tactically wise in setting up the cry that our personal liberties are endangered, that the Constitution has become a scrap of paper, and that President Roosevelt has placed the heel of tyranny upon our necks. Ogden Mills put the case about as well as it could be put in his speech of May 19, and of course the little Theodore Roosevelt was there to say, "Me, too." But I must be pardoned if I indulge in long and ribald laughter. *These* men setting themselves up as saviors of the Republic? Why, they were the ones who helped to rivet upon the United States the very chains that the country has been trying to break under Franklin Roosevelt's leadership. They were all for the tyranny of big business, the reign of the privileged, notably the protected interests, and the safeguarding of wealth first and last. Other men might have the right to speak against the undoubted trend toward dictatorship in Washington, the granting of emergency powers which must be revoked when the emergency ends lest we have a most dangerous beginning of a real dictatorship in Washington, but not these. Senator Borah was better able than these gentlemen to take a position against giving too many powers to the President, as he did in a recent speech, but even Senator Borah knows full well that the whole trend of Republican government, in every Administration since Grant's, has been toward greater and greater centralization of power and authority in Washington, and greater and greater fortification of corporate control of our political and economic life. Only during the Administration of Theodore Roosevelt were there intermittent efforts in the other direction.

When I read the following choice extract from a speech before the Women's Republican Club in New York, I confess that I felt that this sort of campaign was not going to get very far even if it was tactically justifiable. It was Mrs. Paul Fitz Simons, the Republican national committeewoman from Rhode Island, who broke forth thus:

> Never in the history of our nation has sedition been so openly preached, but our citizens seem oblivious to the immediate and increasing danger, which, due to the unprecedented powers vested in the President and by him delegated to his Commissars, is a flaming sword over the citizens of the land. Already liberty and the Bill of Rights have been ruthlessly destroyed. The Constitution is a mere scrap of worthless paper to those who are now regulating our lives.

That is only going to excite people's risibles. Some may even remember that it was the Republican Party which, with a flaming sword in hand, deprived the Filipinos of their freedom. They may recall that their boasted party of liberty has never done anything of importance to rescue the American Negroes, whom it freed from slavery, from peonage and disfranchisement. I wonder if Mrs. Fitz Simons can name any prominent Republican outside of the Progressive group who has really done one thing to stop the innumerable violations of personal liberty which have been going on in this country ever since the war. But waiving all this, my point is that this cry alone has too little basis to be used to turn the Democrats out, especially when those who raise it have themselves such unclean hands. The highest claim made by the Republicans now is that they will win from 80 to 100 seats in the next Congress. That would give them a bare control of the House. But no unbiased political authority believes that anything like that is possible.

No, you can't beat something with nothing. To look forward to a Republican victory in 1936 the Republicans must produce a candidate who can really be considered a rival to Franklin Roosevelt's remarkable personality, with a constructive plan for the social and economic reorganization of the United States which will give a guaranty that it will work better than the Roosevelt program. There is not a single Republican candidate in sight who could be taken seriously. Jim Wadsworth, a delightful country gentleman of large means who has frequently shown the courage of his convictions, as in his open opposition to prohibition in the early days of the noble experiment, has certainly neither the personality nor the ability. Ogden Mills is obviously impossible because he has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of special privilege. As for a social program, who is there in the Republican Party to draft a really liberal and far-reaching one to match that which is being worked out gradually by the Democratic Party? If the President's forthcoming program is to be what has lately been published, with its proposals for unemployment, sickness, disability, and old-age insurance, and death benefits, it will stir and win the whole country, in which the great bulk of us are today tortured by the insecurity of the times and of our economic status. I admit that the NRA is breaking down for lack of proper enforcement and because its tendencies are monopolistic and injurious to the small manufacturer. But what do the Republicans offer to put in its place? The little Theodore says, "My program is the return to the rugged individualism of Herbert Hoover." Does he think the public has forgotten where that rugged individualism landed us?

There is something supremely comic in the happiness of the Republicans over the fact that in Pennsylvania one Republican beat another Republican who stood for the Roosevelt doctrines by something like 110,000 votes. Gifford Pinchot polled about 490,000 votes of Republicans who were entirely satisfied with the New Deal. Are they going to be won back by language like that of Mrs. Fitz Simons, or by the more polished and sensible utterances of Mr. Mills? Nor must the Republicans overlook the La Follette bolt in Wisconsin and the splitting of their party there. Will that be healed by promises of a return to rugged individualism? Finally, let me warn my Eastern readers that this "growing Republican attack" is right here in the East, and that it bears little relationship to what is happening in the West.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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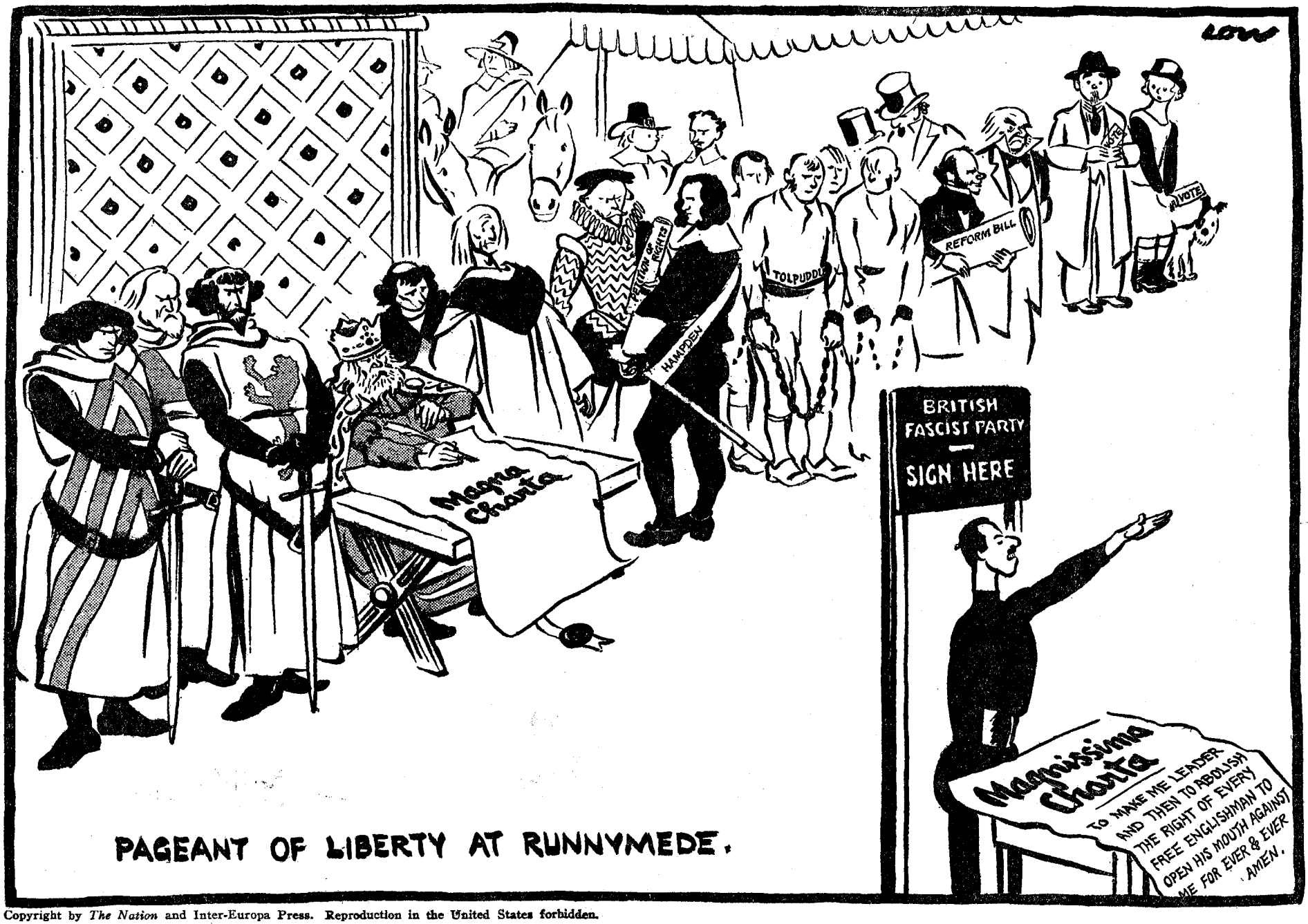

PAGEANT OF LIBERTY AT RUNNYMEDE.

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The Battle of Toledo

By A. J. MUSTE

Toledo, May 27

IN 1919 the Willys-Overland automobile works in Toledo were on strike. The strike was broken by the Killits injunction, one of the most vicious in American labor history. This was an important part of the post-war offensive to smash unionism in the automobile and other basic industries. So far as Toledo is concerned it was successful.

Today a score of companies of the Ohio National Guard are encamped about the Electric Auto-Lite plant, nearly every window in which was smashed by a crowd of 10,000 workers last Wednesday afternoon and evening while several hundred strike-breakers and sheriff's deputies were imprisoned in the plant for fifteen hours; the air in the vicinity of the plant is soaked with tear gas and KOCN (nauseating gas), which can often be smelled a mile or two away in the business or swankier residence section; two men have been killed and scores wounded by the soldiers, who are still being showered with bricks by angry crowds; and the Central Labor Union (A. F. of L.) is taking a general-strike referendum in one of the bitterest labor wars this "sweet land of liberty" has ever known.

The present situation in Toledo has roots also in that Harding-Coolidge-Hoover big-business and financial orgy which was ushered in by the strike-breaking and red-baiting of 1919-21. Out of low-paid workers C. O. Miniger, the executive head of the Auto-Lite Company, and his associates made huge profits. Miniger is a local boy who, until he was nearly thirty-five and "struck oil" in the auto-parts manufacturing business, was a $30-per-week salesman. As the profits piled up he went in for banking. There was the business with which we are now so familiar, of holding companies, loans to insiders, and all the rest. The Ohio Bank and the Security Bank were closed in 1932 in one of the worst of the banking scandals, still in litigation. Miniger has paid his double liability as a stockholder, but his holding companies had withdrawn their money under highly questionable circumstances. Thousands of sober, thrifty Toledoans suffered hardships. Many were among those who smashed the windows in the Auto-Lite plant last Wednesday and in the face of tear-gas bombs hurled by the deputies within tried to ram the factory doors. No one here doubts that if they had succeeded they would have wrecked the plant. The most popular sign carried by the pickets in front of the plant before Wednesday's outbreak read: "We Don't Need Dillinger—We Have Miniger." The deputies captured that sign along with others, but Miniger's attorneys have not included it with those others among the exhibits in Judge Stuart's court, where Louis F. Budenz, executive secretary of the American Workers' Party, Ted Selander and Sam Pollock of the Lucas County Unemployed League, and several members of the Automotive Workers' Union are on trial for violating an injunction against mass picketing.

Toledo, like many other cities, is in financial straits as an aftermath of the era of super-prosperity. One of the results is that 150 policemen have recently been laid off and the wages of the police have been cut to $100 per month, with not too much assurance that even that is going to be paid. It is not surprising, therefore, that the police feel some sympathy for the unemployed and the low-paid workers. At no time in the course of the Auto-Lite and other recent strikes have they indulged in brutality toward the strikers. There was no clubbing on their part even last Tuesday and Wednesday when the excitement was at its height. Early on Thursday morning I personally witnessed any number of instances of strike sympathizers hurling rocks at the plant while the police looked on, warned them when deputies inside the plant were preparing another gas attack, gave first aid to the wounded besiegers, and solicitously rushed them off in police cars to hospitals.

The rough work throughout the strike has been done by Sheriff Krieger and special deputies paid by the Auto-Lite Company according to the sheriff's sworn testimony in court. The immediate responsibility for violence in this strike rests upon the provocative tactics of the Auto-Lite Company and these deputies. For example, on Wednesday just before the big outbreak occurred, several hundred pickets were marching back and forth before the plant gates with thousands of spectators looking on from the other side of the street. At one gate in full view of these thousands a young girl picket got an ugly wound behind the ear from a bolt thrown out of the factory window. At another gate an elderly man urged the crowd to join the pickets and was knocked down by a deputy's fist. Infuriated by this brutality the crowds rushed in a solid mass to join the pickets.

Strike-breakers were rushed out of the plant and turned streams of water on the crowd, which then forced the strike-breakers back into the building with showers of bricks. Deputies who had also retreated to the factory then unloosed the gas attack. Very inconsiderately they tossed several bombs right into the midst of the police, whose sympathy for the strikers was not diminished thereby.

It is, of course, high time to bring the Roosevelt Administration and the NRA into this story. It is the disorganization of former Postmaster-General Brown's local political machine following the Roosevelt landslide which is in considerable degree responsible for the fact that, so far at least, it has not been possible to rally "the forces of law and order" successfully against the workers. It is the present disorganization in the Roosevelt regime and the realization which has fully dawned upon the workers that not Section 7-a of the NRA nor labor boards nor even the White Father himself can be trusted to give them anything, which has brought about the militant fight for organization in Toledo as in Minneapolis and elsewhere.

Last August, when the first wave of organization under the New Deal got under way, an A. F. of L. federal local, the Automotive Workers' Union, was formed by the workers in the Logan Gear, Bingham, Electric Auto-Lite, and other automobile-parts shops in Toledo. In February the union demanded from the employers recognition, a 10 per cent wage increase, and the establishment of a seniority system. There was a five-day strike at the end of February and the

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beginning of March. It ended when an immediate 5 per cent increase was given in addition to the promise that by April 1 a contract with the union would be negotiated.

April Fool's Day neared. The union presented its contract to the employers. Thomas Ramsey, business agent of the Automotive Workers' Union, was practically thrown out of the Auto-Lite office. The company presented its own contract, a near yellow-dog affair which made no provision at all for collective bargaining. The Subregional Labor Board did nothing. Active workers were fired. The company refused to negotiate. In the middle of April the strike was renewed.

The strike was successful from the workers' point of view—too successful to the Auto-Lite Company's notion. An injunction was resorted to. That had done the trick in 1919, why not in 1934? At first it seemed that the company strategy would succeed. Mass picketing ceased. The union for the moment accepted the limitation of twenty-five pickets to each gate. Strike-breakers filtered in. At this point a new and significant force swung into action. Toledo and Lucas County unemployed are organized in the Lucas County Unemployed League, affiliated with the Ohio and the National Unemployed League (not to be confused with the Unemployed Councils). It has been the policy of the leagues everywhere to support union-organization campaigns, to warn the unemployed away from striking mills and mines, and to assist in picketing, relief, and other strike activities of the employed workers. The Lucas County Unemployed League had offered its aid in the first Auto-Lite strike and did so again in the second.

Guided by Louis F. Budenz, who has successfully smashed many injunctions in his career as a labor organizer, the Lucas County Unemployed League, led by two young Toledoans, Ted Selander and Sam Pollock, now took the initiative in smashing the Auto-Lite injunction. On May 5 the Lucas County Unemployed League Anti-Injunction Committee sent a letter to Judge Stuart saying: "On Monday morning, May 7, at the Auto-Lite plant, the Lucas County Unemployed League, in protest against the injunction issued by your court, will deliberately and specifically violate the injunction enjoining us from sympathetically picketing peacefully in support of the striking auto workers' federal union." They described the injunction as "an abrogation of our democratic rights" which contravened "the spirit and letter of Section 7-a of the NIRA."

On the morning indicated the "mass" picketing was carried on by Selander, Pollock, and two of the members of the union. The four were arrested, charged with contempt of court, and held for twenty-four hours. Released on bail they promptly returned to the picket line and were joined by others. A few days later forty-six men were arrested, including of course the irrepressible Selander and Pollock. When the trial for contempt came up, an attempt was made to isolate these two leaders and three active union members, sentence them, and let the rest go. The other forty-one insisted they were "guilty of the same offense" and that it must be "forty-six or none." They were backed in their demand by hundreds of union members and sympathizers, who took possession of the courthouse and cheered and sang while Selander from the witness stand expounded the principles of militant labor, and Attorney Edward Lamb exposed the mockery of much of the legal machinery of capitalist government. After this amazing scene the court recessed for lunch. The court enjoyed a long lunch hour and later in the afternoon, after two hours of confusion, mumbled what was supposedly a decision, but which no one to this day has been able to explain. At all events those who had been cited for contempt walked blithely out of the court and back to the picket lines!

Louis Budenz came to Toledo in person and assisted in mass demonstrations. The Central Labor Union of Toledo and the A. F. of L. locals affiliated with it began to talk of a general strike and initiated a referendum on the subject. Fifty-three locals have already voted for a general strike. The strike would be partly in support of the Auto-Lite strike, partly a means by which various trades would gain the union recognition and wage increases which they have long desired, partly in support of the effort to organize the Toledo Edison Company now being made by Oliver Myers, business agent of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Myers is a highly intelligent, fighting industrial unionist who says he is out to organize all the Edison employees, "the power plants too."

Thus the way was prepared for the great demonstration of last Wednesday which we have already described. Just now the hot-dog and popcorn stand which did a flourishing business within a block or so of the Auto-Lite plant throughout that demonstration is still on the job. So is the National Guard, whose members are increasingly ruthless. An army of mediators is at work. They are headed by Charles P. Taft, who has just demonstrated his liberalism and his impartiality in an amazing fashion. After the writer of this article, Professor Lawrence Sears of Ohio Wesleyan University, and Attorney Edward Lamb had tried in vain for ten hours on last Saturday to obtain access for counsel to Ted Selander, who for some as yet unknown reason was picked up by the National Guard and held incomunicado, they asked Mr. Taft if he could not assist in this effort. Mr. Taft declined and in the course of this conversation revealed his mental attitude and utter unfitness for the role of impartial mediator by remarking. "This strike should never have been called in the first place!"

The Automotive Workers' Union is on the job and announces that it will never give up the fight until the militia is out and the union recognized. The trade unions are on the job and have called a great torch-light parade and mass-meeting for June 1. The signal for the general strike may be given that night. Arthur Garfield Hays of the American Civil Liberties Union arrives in a few hours to assist in the defense of Budenz and of union and unemployed leaders charged with contempt for violating Judge Stuart's injunction. P. J. Gould, representative of the Lake Erie Chemical Company of Cleveland, assures the Toledo *News-Bee* that his company, which is supplying bombs to the National Guard, is on the job, too. They are sending in stronger ones now, since, Mr. Gould laments, "the rioters seem to eat this tear gas. They take it and ask for more." The Auto-Lite Company is also on the job though it is not making any automobile parts just now. The local papers announce that "heavy steel plates were being installed late Saturday along the lower doors and windows." Indications were that this was "part of the general cleaning up and repair work." Maybe the Auto-Lite is going to be a closed shop from now on.

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A London Letter

By HAROLD J. LASKI

London, May 13

I

ECONOMIC nationalism is bringing its revenges. When the ex-free trader, Mr. Runciman, announces to the House of Commons that a quota will be introduced against Japanese textile goods seeking importation into the British colonial empire, Lancashire and a passionately protectionist majority all cheer with enthusiasm. Yet it is difficult not to feel that this is the beginning of grave events of which we have not heard the last by any means.

Let us grant that there is some case for action against Japan. Her vastly depreciated currency acts as a subsidy to her exports. Part, at least, of the reason for her competitive power is the sweated labor costs in her bill of production. The effort of the British government to arrive at a trade agreement with Japan was treated with equivocation, delay, hesitation, to a degree that made it evident that Japan was too confident of her strength as an industrial producer even to wish to take negotiations seriously. And anyone who visits the Lancashire cotton towns, who sees there the intensity of suffering through unemployment, will understand that no government could fail to do something which could be represented there as action against its sufferings. It must also be recognized that in the present temper of the nation any policy which tells Japan that there is a limit to British patience with her general aggressiveness is certainly to be widely popular.

When that is said, it must be emphasized that the government has not really confronted its problems. Everyone knows that a great deal of Lancashire's misfortune is its own fault. The textile industry is in a state of anarchy. It suffers from over-capitalization, bad organization, inefficient methods of distribution, failure to take advantage of technical development in the industry. No inconsiderable part of Japan's advantage in the industrial race is unquestionably due to her superior efficiency in these matters. Everyone has known this for years. No government has had the courage to tackle it because no government has had the courage to attack a fiercely individualistic body of vested interests whose behavior, for some fifteen years now, has been indefensible. The quota policy of the government merely postpones a day of reckoning. It stabilizes an inefficiency which everyone knows to be unpardonable.

That is not all. It seems to many of us pretty hard, say, on Nigeria, that its citizens should be compelled to pay more for cotton goods, not in their own interest, but in that of Lancashire. If that is the price of empire, it is not an easy price to pay. For it is the deliberate subjugation of colonial interests to bolster up the declining competitive power of the mother-country. It is the use of the state power to force a weaker imperial unit to subsidize the wages of the Lancashire worker and the profits of his inefficient master. Worse economics it is difficult to imagine—and it is done, of course, without any pretense of consultation with the consumers who will be affected by the decision.

It is unthinkable that Japan will acquiesce in the decision without fighting back. A narrow front of conflict will become a wide one; and no one can pretend to foresee where this may end. This quota may hasten Japan in her policy of Eastern expansion. It may prove the incident which confirms her in her decision to break the Tripartite Naval Agreement next year. It may lead her into those closer relations with Germany of which the result may easily be the basis of that attack on Russia which would, I believe, set the whole world in flames. If the restriction policy is successful, it may confront Japan with an unemployment problem which, added to her present troubles, may encourage her to the view that the conquest of new markets by the sword is the historic method by which imperial autocracy finds relief from domestic burdens. And the encouragement it offers to India and the dominions to press for relief from their own foreign competitors by seeking further markets by quota in Great Britain opens up vistas the nature of which is definitely unpleasant. A nation which begins to tread the path chosen by the National Government in 1931 enters a road of which the complexities may very easily mean grave disaster in the end. So far from winning a victory, Mr. Runciman's policy has merely created new problems; and it is only too obvious that he does not know the answer to any of them. He has shown once more—if it still needs to be shown—that the state as an economic unit is a dangerous monster in an internationally interdependent world. By doing by fiat from London what he should have attempted by negotiation at Geneva he has made the prospect of world peace even dimmer than it was before.

II

With the refusal of the government to support Lord Salisbury's bill for strengthening the powers of the House of Lords, one more effort to reform that body has proved abortive; I do not think now that another effort will be made until after the next general election. But the debate was intensely interesting for its revelation of the Conservative mind. Taken as a whole, the peers do not doubt that they owe it to the nation to make abortive any future Labor victory. They would have no hesitation in creating a new chamber with a permanent Conservative majority. They would, if they could, undo the whole effect of the Parliament Act by taking away from the Speaker of the House of Commons his power to decide what is a financial measure. Many of them would be willing to make it impossible for the Commons to put any measure on the statute book until a new general election, exacted at the pleasure of the Lords, had refreshed the power of the government responsible for it. One peer high in the ranks of the Tory party actually pleaded for a revival of monarchical authority as a safeguard of the nation—by which he clearly meant the interests of property—against socialism. I must not omit the special insight of Lord Redesdale, who explained that the hereditary principle lies at the foundation of the Christian religion.

For the moment the danger of a revival of the Lords has passed. But the discussion is important because it shows

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that a Labor revival of serious proportions will not go unchallenged. If the Labor Party wins the next election, it is a pretty safe speculation that the Tories will at least try to exploit obsolete vestiges of the royal prerogative against a socialist program. If there is a Conservative majority, there is certain to be a new second chamber so constituted as to form a decisive bulwark against socialism. We are moving, I suspect, toward a position when all the dangerous resources of a constitution mainly built on unwritten understandings may be deliberately exploited against the Labor Party. I think it is a safe prediction that the present simple faith of most of its leaders in the willingness of privilege to play the game will be put to a stern test in the next three or four years.

III

At any rate they ought to be moved by the implications of the Incitement to Sedition bill, which is now in the committee stage of the House of Commons. It is a bill which ought to rejoice the heart of men like Mr. Mitchell Palmer and Congressman Hamilton Fish. No serious reason for its introduction has been given; and its clauses are drawn so widely that in the hands of a "patriotic" magistrate the most honorable pacifist propaganda might easily be construed as a deliberate attempt to incite the troops to mutiny. The bill has been riddled with criticism; even so stout a Conservative as Sir William Holdsworth, the successor of Dicey and the most eminent of our academic lawyers, has attacked it root and branch. The Attorney-General has accepted some amendments; but the general nature of the bill remains unchanged. It is the worst measure of its kind we have seen in Great Britain these hundred years.

Its introduction is important because it symbolizes the growth of a fascist temper in Great Britain. It must be taken in conjunction with facts like the increase in the number of Communist prosecutions; the widening sympathy for Sir Oswald Mosley; the increasing insistence in the press that a victory for Labor is incompatible with the maintenance of a constitutional system, an insistence in which even Mr. Baldwin joins; the deliberate militarization of the police by Lord Trenchard, who is seeking, with the warm approval of the government, to create therein an officer class mainly recruited from the public schools. It looks as though conservatism had made up its mind to regard the privileges of property as an Ulster to the service of which they are entitled to twist the constitution just as they please.

There is some evidence that the Labor Party is not wholly unaware of these dangers. But I think it is true to say that its main leadership and, not least important, the party machine gravely underestimate their significance. They think that some mysterious entity called the "national character" will enable Great Britain to muddle through in the future as in the past. They wholly forget that a nation only muddles through on two conditions: (1) its industrial supremacy must leave it ample margins within which to make concessions to the masses; (2) it must have agreed within itself upon the basic assumptions of the national faith. Neither of these conditions any longer holds in Great Britain, and their absence makes a trust in "national character" an inadmissible gamble for whoever maintains confidence in it.

No doubt it is true that communism, like official fascism, has as yet no serious hold in Great Britain. But I think this is due to two special reasons. The electorate still wants to see what a Labor Government can do with the parliamentary machine; and communism will not grow—the chance of war apart—until that experience has tested its adaptability. The strategy of the Communists, in the second place, is so futile—sane as their diagnosis often is—that they do far more harm to themselves than they do to their opponents. Not even daily reiteration will persuade the electorate to believe that George Lansbury and Stafford Cripps are tools of the capitalist class. The Communist Party in Great Britain has many valuable qualities; but it lacks that saving grace of common sense which is the mainspring of political influence.

Can Farm Prices Go Up?

By W. P. MORTENSON

DURING the past 100 years farm prices have fallen many times, have been shattered and mended, and then have slowly climbed the hill to better times again, only to repeat the topple and crash. This time, however, farm prices seem completely smashed, with little apparent vitality left for recovery.

For a decade agriculture has been in distress. Farmers have protested; legislation has been enacted; research has been set under way. Today farm prices command the attention of economists throughout the country. For example, the University of Wisconsin has sponsored a historical study to determine the movements of farm prices in the past and their probable movements in the future. For three years a research staff has been gathering and interpreting price data on the important farm products. No one can doubt that the results of such findings will be of great value in providing intelligent guidance for agriculture.

From these studies, covering farm prices over a period of many decades, facts have been gleaned which prompt one to question certain beliefs very common among laymen, to a considerable extent among public officials and aspirants for office, and to a lesser extent among economists. Since the beginning of the present distressed condition of agriculture, the period of 1910-14 has been referred to as the "normal period of agricuture," and a great deal of the attempted legislation since the early twenties has supported that assumption. Indeed, the present Agricultural Adjustment Act has defined the years 1910-14 as the "base period" for agriculture. This, supposedly, was a time during which farm purchasing power was about normal. Agricultural leaders and farmers in general are hoping to enjoy once more the purchasing power they had in this "base period." One may well agree that it is a laudable goal toward which to work, and everyone interested in agriculture would be happy to see it

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reached. If it is a point which farmers can reasonably expect to reach and maintain, it will profit them to be apprised of the fact as soon as possible in order that they may take the necessary steps in readjusting their farm operations and future commitments.

The well-informed will agree that the period of the World War was an abnormal one, and should not be chosen as a "base period," which presumes normality. Nor has any period since the World War been a truly normal one. We need, therefore, to go back before that time for dependable price comparisons. Let us see, then, how this so-called "base period," 1910-14, compares with earlier periods. Briefly, during the sixty-year span from 1840 to 1900 we find that farm prices were relatively lower than during the period centering around 1910-14. On the basis of 100 for 1910-14, the index of Wisconsin agricultural prices in 1860 stood at 71, in 1880 at 73, and in 1900 at 62. Thus, may we not conclude that if the 1910-14 period is to be taken as normal, then farm prices for the whole period prior to that date must be assumed to have been abnormally low?

Judging from these figures it probably would be more nearly correct to say that farm prices during the period 1910-14 were high, and during the preceding years they were "normal." Instead of being considered a "base period" upon which to rest the structure of farm prices, 1910-14 really should be considered in the nature of a peak period. During that particular period agriculture was in a favorable position for two reasons: because prices of farm products were high, and because products which farmers bought were relatively low in price compared with several decades before that time. Up to that time farm taxes had never been high, and except for about two decades after the Civil War debts had not been burdensome. In appraising the present condition of agriculture we need, therefore, to consider, first, the exchange value of farm products, which depends as much upon the prices of the things the farmer buys as upon those he sells; and, second, his fixed expenses—debts and taxes.

Leaving taxes and debts out of consideration for the moment, it is not absolutely essential that farm prices be raised to some former high level in order to put farmers in tune again with the rest of the country. The same results might be obtained if prices of the products of industry were lowered to meet those of the farmer. For example, it matters little to Jerry Smith whether he sells milk for $2 a can or $1 a can, so long as he can buy three shirts for the price of a can of milk. Over a period of years Smith is concerned more with the buying power of his products than with the prices they net. Agriculture, therefore, may be relatively well off even though the prices of farm products are not high, provided the prices of the goods bought by farmers are low enough. Further improvement in the purchasing power of farm products depends substantially as much upon the possibility of continued improvements in the output per man of industrial goods, with consequent lowered prices, as upon any considerable increase in the general level of agricultural prices. Farm products, low as they appear today, are still about equal to their 1850-1910 average. Products bought by farmers—non-agricultural products—likewise are about the same as the average during that period. Therefore, while the exchange value of agricultural products is only about three-fourths of what it was during 1910-14, it is only a little below the 1850-1910 level.

From the standpoint of the prices of agricultural products, the farmer is not in such desperate circumstances compared with the period prior to 1910. He is at considerable disadvantage in the products he must buy. He is at a great disadvantage, however, in the matter of debts and taxes. Debt and tax burdens today loom like mountains for the farmer. Accordingly, even though Jerry Smith is able to skimp on clothing, new machinery, fencing, and lumber, the burden of meeting certain recurring fixed charges in holding his farm constitutes a heavy drain upon his present earnings and past savings. What really interests farmers today is the answer to this question: What will happen to farm prices during the next ten years or so?

There are those who insist that industry cannot prosper unless agriculture is prosperous. That is, agriculture leads the way—it is the determining factor; hence it must be improved first. Many who are interested in the welfare of agriculture gain comfort from this belief. Sadly enough, it is largely untrue. Agriculture is not, even under normal conditions, an extremely heavy purchaser of industrial goods. Probably agriculture has never enjoyed more than one-fifth of the total national income. Moreover, a dollar spent by a farmer sets no more wheels in motion than a dollar spent by his cousin in the city. It is more likely that a prosperous agriculture depends upon a prosperous industry than the other way around. Agriculture—in the present world economic situation—is very unlikely to rise to prosperity unless business improves and the unemployed again become buyers of those farm products which are now considered by many as semi-luxuries—for instance, butter and cream—as well as of those food products which are essential for the maintenance of life and a fair degree of health.

If industry again provides an abundance of jobs in the cities at attractive wages, thereby drawing people back to the city and placing the present unemployed on the pay rolls, the agricultural outlook will again brighten up. It has always been true in the past that during favorable industrial conditions literally hundreds of thousands of young men dropped the plow and took advantage of attractive wages in the city. This happened from 1910 through most of the prosperous era. Then agricultural prices were favorable largely because industry was prosperous, world markets offered an outlet for the products of agriculture, and pay rolls were such that the city dweller had power to purchase semi-luxuries as well as the necessities of life.

The government, through the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, is engaged in a great campaign to improve agriculture through production control. Will this program bring farm purchasing power and farm incomes back to the 1910-14 level? There are grave doubts. Though it may succeed in raising the price of a bushel of grain or 100 pounds of milk by reducing farm production, it must be remembered that when farmers produce fewer and fewer pounds of milk or bushels of grain during succeeding years, even at higher prices, the net farm income may still be low compared with the "base" period. Reduction in crops does not necessarily result in a higher cash income. Ezekiel and Bean, economic advisers to the Agricultural Administration, state that for such things as meat animals and dairy and poultry products prices depend very largely upon the amount of income which the consumers have to spend. They add that readjustments in supplies and improvement in marketing meth-

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ods can improve farm purchasing power only in a limited way unless city purchasing power is restored. They conclude that complete price recovery of these products to a point at which it means a substantial improvement in income must therefore await general economic recovery. In the case of such products as fruits and vegetables it has been found that, say, a 10 per cent decrease in production causes less than a 10 per cent increase in prices. Thus a large crop brings in a greater total income than a small one.

In addition, it should be mentioned that when farm production is reduced, it is impossible to reduce costs accordingly, since approximately two-thirds of the farm costs are relatively fixed and thus independent of the volume produced. For that reason the reduced production will be at a higher per unit cost than a larger production. We may therefore, it seems, safely conclude that cutting down production cannot guarantee higher farm incomes to everyone. Controlled production may bring higher incomes for the producers of some crops, but for others it may actually reduce the total income.

It is important that farmers realize that present reduced city pay rolls will react against price increases resulting from production control. A plan to raise farm prices to a point at which farmers, the middlemen, and the NRA will be satisfied may meet with firm resistance on the part of city housewives, especially those who control the purses of large families with small incomes.

The facts literally drive one to conclude that farmers must try to adjust their immediate expenditures and their future obligations in anticipation of farm purchasing power and net income *below* the 1910-14 average. Those who do so will doubtless fare much better during the next decade than those who assume obligations with the expectation that their purchasing power will soar again.

Shall we, then, resign ourselves in hopelessness, or shall we heed the call of the countryside which promises: "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire"? Rural America may not have as much to offer as Horace Greeley believed when he enthusiastically urged, "Go West, young man, go West." Yet even though the farm may not afford a high labor income during the next decade, it offers security, a home, and a desirable place to rear a family, and these are items which command the attention not only of prospective buyers but also of those now on farms. The farmer of the next decade is not likely to be among those on the high-income tax list, but if he has set his place in order he can always depend upon the farm as an island of safety, where the family may live as a unit with opportunities to take part and pride in community affairs, and where the cupboard will not be bare when the dinner bell rings.

Attempts are on foot in many regions to relieve farm real estate from the present staggering tax load. Farm values and debts are being written down; inefficiencies in operation are being overcome. Such adjustments will serve to transfer many farms from the category of liabilities to that of assets.

"Hands Off China"

By CRISPIAN CORCORAN

Tientsin, April 25

THE "Hands off China" declaration came as a surprise and a shock to the world, a surprise and a shock that were deepened when elaborations by Mr. Yokoyama at Geneva, Ambassador Saito in Washington, and Minister Ariyoshi in Peiping proved conclusively that it was not a minor official's indiscretion but a bona fide statement of policy. Actually, it need not have been so surprising. As early as last January the question of international cooperation in China was gone over with a fine-toothed comb during interpellations in the Tokio Diet, and Foreign Minister Hirota hinted at the possibility of action in a speech on the subject. On April 9 a still more definite indication of the way the wind was blowing was given by a Japanese Foreign Office spokesman, who, in an interview granted to the press, stated flatly that Japan was not only opposed in principle to international participation in Chinese reconstruction but would take all possible measures to resist such participation when it entered a practical stage. For one reason or another this statement was not given wide publicity, and we in China only learned of it from mailed copies of Japanese newspapers. One suspects cable censorship. Be that as it may, nine days later the same statement was broadcast throughout the world.

The immediate reason for the declaration seems to have been the return to Europe of Dr. Rajchman, League of Nations envoy and economic adviser to the Nanking government. Dr. Rajchman, a Pole, was sent to China a year or so ago in accordance with one of the recommendations of the ill-starred Lytton report providing for "temporary international cooperation in the internal reconstruction of China as suggested by the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen." He is now returning to Europe by way of the United States, presumably with concrete recommendations. Although it is most improbable that his activities involved any immediate threat to Japan's economic hegemony in China, they certainly symbolized the determination of the Powers to checkmate Japanese ambitions on the Asiatic mainland. Now the Japanese are determined that neither Dr. Rajchman nor the policies he represents shall ever return.

The European Powers and the United States have for the past year taken a great part in the arming of China, particularly in the building up of air fleets for both Nanking and Canton. Along with airplanes, they have sent military advisers to instruct the buyers in their use and make sure that more orders were forthcoming. Thus besides a brand-new British air attaché and an Italian ace with an imposing war record, there are now in Shanghai Captain Frank Buck, the American "human bullet," and a host of other military gentlemen, outstanding among whom is General Hans von Seeckt, who was responsible for the reorganization of the Reichswehr after the Kapp Putsch and, with Schacht, Thyssen, Hugenberg, and Krupp von Bohlen, was a member of the reactionary gang that brought Hitler to power in Germany. General von Seeckt, while helping in the organization

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of crack battalions for Chiang Kai-shek, is doubtless keeping his eyes open for business opportunities of which his friends among the steel magnates may take advantage. Besides the representatives of the international armaments ring, circling like vultures over the fat fields of China, there are a host of industrial promoters, mostly British, running to and fro between Nanking and Shanghai. Among the armament firms now represented in that city are Vickers Armstrong (British), du Pont de Nemours (United States), many American aviation enterprises, the French Schneider-Creusot and the Hotchkiss interests, the Czecho-Slovakian Skoda Works, the British Imperial Chemical Industries, and Dutch and Italian interests. German firms specialize in passenger and semi-military aircraft, as well as in small arms. The activities of these people are, naturally enough, supported by their respective governments, which are thus able to report the emergence of their heavy industries from the depression and have the satisfaction of knowing that the arms manufacturers are keeping "in training" for possible crises, by working on a war footing.

Less obvious, but to the Japanese no less alarming, are the importations of foreign machinery for China's cotton mills and nascent heavy industries, the purchases of railway and air-line stock, and the financial commitments resulting therefrom. Rather alarming, too, is the bid of the United States for the China market as exemplified in recent silver legislation and the visit of Professor James H. Rogers to Nanking.

All these factors, combined with Japanese allegations that special rights have been granted to the United States in the province of Fukien, seem to have prompted the present declaration. They hardly explain, though, why all of Hirota's patient spade work for the bettering of his country's international position should have been thrown overboard in such a spectacular manner. It seems very probable that a preliminary understanding was arrived at with some Power or group of Powers, and the finger points to France.

Although Paris has regarded with some misgivings the Nazi-Japanese rapprochement brought about by the combination of circumstances that forced both Japan and Germany out of the League, Franco-Japanese economic collaboration in Manchuria seems to have a brilliant future. One of the most interesting results of the Manchurian adventure has been the increase of French investments in Japan. The Banque Franco-Asiatique is known to be working with the Japanese General Staff on plans for the construction of strategic railways in Manchuria. Control of the Chosen (Korea) Corporation has passed to this bank from the British Harman group. France has an interest in the Chinese Eastern Railway, unrecognized by the Soviets, but an excellent bargaining counter for the Japanese. The great investments of French finance in enterprises dependent upon the success of Japanese imperialism at the expense of the U. S. S. R. will certainly shape French policy in the event of a conflict. Two more observations may legitimately be made in this connection. The evacuation of the Japanese at the end of the "Shanghai War" of 1932 commenced on the day that the reactionary Tardieu Government fell. Greater Japanese aggressiveness coincided with the accession of the Doumergue Cabinet (which includes Tardieu, Laval, and Pétain), and the "Hands off China" declaration was issued on April 17, the date of the French note which virtually squelched European disarmament. These may be merely coincidences, but the whole-hearted approval with which the Paris press—notoriously government-subsidized—greeted the declaration points to the less charitable conclusion. One longs for a revolution or two in Europe, if only that a few more secret treaties may be published.

I am convinced that we have in China today substantially the same conflict of imperialisms that was observable before and during the war. The Powers which in 1934 uphold Chiang Kai-shek backed Yuan Shih-kai in 1913, exacting as the price of their support his acquiescence in the plans of the Banking Consortium to secure a strangle-hold on China's economic life. This Banking Consortium was severely castigated for its predatory aims by President Wilson, whereupon the United States seceded and Russia and Japan entered, the other members being Britain, France, and Germany. Japan watched the possibility of international financial control of China with as great alarm then as she does now and presented her first "Hands off China" ultimatum, the notorious Twenty-one Demands, in 1915 when the Powers were at death grips in Europe. The Powers were forced to acquiesce, and even the United States, under the exigencies of war, acknowledged "that Japan has special interests in China, particularly for the parts to which her possessions are contiguous" (Lansing-Ishii agreement, 1917). By 1921 the United States had reversed its attitude and the Washington Conference was called to save the Chinese markets for white imperialism, as exemplified by the famous Lamont-Stevens consortium. The Lansing-Ishii agreement was abrogated, as was the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and the Nine-Power Pact guaranteed the administrative independence of China and the Open Door. Today, having smashed the Nine-Power Pact along with other consequences of the Washington Conference, Japan, with amazing consistency, continues to pursue her old pre-war policy, which for some years she was forced to clothe in more pacific forms. This development is on a par with the return to the pre-war anarchy the world over, and the 1935 Washington conference, if it ever assembles, will be called upon to face an even more serious situation than was discussed by its predecessor.

Japan was thwarted in her ambitions after the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, again in 1905, and yet again in 1921. She does not intend to be thwarted again. The plan formulated by the Emperor Meiji shortly after the restoration and again set forth in the famous Tanaka Memorial is still the basis of her policy, which has as its final aims hegemony over China, the elimination of the Soviets from Asia, and eventually the elimination of the United States and Great Britain from the Pacific. The strange and unique synthesis of the interests of the feudal Choshu and Satsuma clans, which, with the great trusts of Mitsui and Misubishi, dominate the army and navy, push Japan to greater and greater politico-economic aggression. The Emperor, as before the restoration, is under the control of a Shogunate, only this time the Shogun wears the habiliments of modern capitalism.

Japanese intervention in North China or on the Yangtze may be expected as a result of the "Hands off China" statement. In the North the Kwantung army is establishing itself in Chahar, a strategic base for a possible descent on the Trans-Siberian Railway. It is also insisting on the acceptance by Nanking of demands which, though insignificant in themselves, carry the dangerous implication of de facto rec-

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ognition of Manchukuo. If Nanking accepts, it will nullify the international guaranties—or what is left of them—it invokes and will spoil its chances of rapprochement with Canton, chances which have recently brightened somewhat. The accentuation of the differences between the two factions is, of course, ardently desired by the Japanese. If Nanking does not accede, the Japanese will establish a new government in North China which will do all they ask.

I am considerably distracted while writing the present article by bursts of machine-gun fire, which has been going on for some time. The Japanese garrisons in Peiping and Tientsin have been engaged in field exercises for days in a manner calculated to make the population of the North extremely apprehensive of the future. Intervention in the Yangtze is not improbable if Chiang continues with his program of rearmament.

One aspect of the "Hands off China" declaration not often stressed is the fact that it demonstrates the effect of the Soviet troop concentration in Siberia. The present issue with the Powers is undoubtedly a diversion from the Soviet-Japanese conflict. Changes in the Far East are kaleidoscopic, however, and the advantage gleaned by the U. S. S. R. will not be permanent. Nevertheless, it shows that Soviet Russia is fully competent to take care of her own interests and can play the diplomatic-military game as well as an imperialist Power, for an infinitely better cause.

Meanwhile the following possibilities are worthy of serious consideration as alternative or correlative consequences of the Japanese action:

1. An economic and diplomatic offensive by the Powers, with an Anglo-American bloc in the lead, which at a further stage may turn into a military offensive.

2. A policy of attrition having its stake in the eventual explosion of revolutionary forces in Japan, which may be forestalled, however, by a Japanese military irruption on the Asiatic continent, possibly in Siberia.

3. The acquiescence of Nanking in Japan's demands coming as a result of the unwillingness of the Powers to commit themselves to an active policy.

4. As a consequence of (3) a synthesis of rival imperialisms and a partition of China, which would logically be followed by a combined front against the Soviets.

The World's Greatest Racket

By JOHANNES STEEL

THE world's greatest racket is the armament racket. It has the singular distinction that those engaged in it do not mind competition, for every armament maker realizes that increased sales in foreign markets by his own or any other firm increase automatically the demand in the home market. To produce this effect it is only necessary that sufficient publicity be given to these sales, which is easily achieved through the press the armament makers control.

Armament shares are the most accurate barometer for the political atmosphere the world over. On March 20, 1933, for example, when the Powers concerned were seriously considering the MacDonald disarmament scheme, the shares of the Skoda Works stood at 320 French francs. In the last week of April, after the MacDonald plan was rejected, these shares rose to 375. At the end of that same week several Franco-German border incidents occurred, and the shares rose to 430. They remained at this level for most of the month of May, falling in the last week of May to 400 francs, to rise again in June, after the failure of the World Economic Conference, to 430. The movements of the shares of the Société Hotchkiss, a French machine-gun firm, showed the same tendencies. On March 20, 1933, the shares of this company were quoted at 1,135 francs; in the last week of April, after the Franco-German border incidents, they soared to 1,320, and after the failure of the World Economic Conference experienced a further rise to 1,385. The shares of Schneider-Creusot, which in March, 1933, stood at 1,340 francs, rose by the end of April to 1,580 francs. In other words, the reaction of the armament makers to these events was uniform; they looked forward to increased business.

The story of post-war political developments in Europe and the Far East cannot be better told than in the following figures showing the dividends paid by the firm of Skoda during the past fifteen years:

Per cent	*Year*
5	1920
8½	1921
10	1922-23
12½	1924
13¾	1925
15½	1926
17½	1927
22	1928
28½	1929-30

To achieve these splendid results, this firm has created war scares, bribed government officials, and disseminated false reports of the military expenditures of various neighboring countries in order to stimulate armament expenditure at home.

The most notorious of the Skoda scandals concerns a certain Bruno Seletzki, Rumanian representative of the firm. On March 25, 1933, the Rumanian authorities discovered that the Czech firm of Skoda had evaded taxes due in Rumania to the extent of 65,000,000 lei. They instituted an inquiry at the offices of Bruno Seletzki, the firm's chief representative in Bucharest. This search led to the discovery of secret files and military documents in his office, which was then officially sealed. A few days later, however, in spite of all precautions, it was found that the official seals had been broken, and that documents which were especially compromising and important had been removed. The incident was brought up in the Rumanian Parliament by Dr. Lupu and led to the arrest of Seletzki, who was charged with the crimes of evading state taxes, corrupting influential persons who could be of use to Skoda, and removing important military documents.

No sooner was this affair exposed than it was realized that a number of high officials in the army were involved, and

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that here was a first-rate scandal. General Petrescu, who was charged with the investigation, demanded in his first report that officials whose guilt was known should be tried by a court martial. All those named by him were suspended from the ranks and kept at the disposition of the Ministry. Immediately after this General Sica Popescu, who had manipulated a very large ordnance order with Skoda, and who at this time was commander of an army corps stationed at Craiova, shot himself in his study. His files concerning the Skoda agreements had been found to contain a letter from him to Seletzki which proved that a bribe had been paid to him. His suicide helped to tear the veil from the Skoda affair and revealed a morass of official corruption and commercial spying.

Sometime before, on the death of a Colonel Strajescu, 54,000,000 lei in cash had been found in his house. Colonel Strajescu had worked in several departments of the War Ministry and had had very close relations with numerous army contractors, especially with Seletzki. At the time of his death the origin of this money was a mystery, but the Skoda affair indicated that it came from Seletzki. After Colonel Strajescu's death a number of compromising files were stolen from his flat and sold to a friend of Seletzki's for the sum of 3,000,000 lei.

A letter discovered at this time which had been sent by a director of a munition firm in Holland to the director of the Skoda Works showed the intimate relations of international munition makers. The director of the Dutch firm demanded, with threats, a commission for having allowed the Rumanian government to give a certain order to the firm of Skoda at double the price which his own firm would have charged. The letter read:

> Doubtless you are not unaware of the fact that having made an offer to the competent army services of war materials for several milliards on behalf of the firm which I represent, I have nevertheless not insisted upon this offer in order not to stop the said order being given to the Skoda factories, which you direct, and which in fact received an order for the same quantity of material, but at double the price.
>
> Beyond this, I would like to remind you that I have other claims on the gratitude of the firm of Skoda, and that I have knowledge of the Skoda firm, and that I have proved my friendship and pacific spirit since 1928. At that time, having to give an order for 9,500 projectile bodies, I naturally offered the choice to the staff major in the name of the firm of Breda, which I represented, indicating as the price the sum of 17,550,000 lei. The offer was given to Skoda for the price of 31,200,000, a difference of 14,000,000 out of a total of 31,000,000.
>
> On the advice of a mutual friend who occupies a very high position, I did not protest against the rejection of my offer, infinitely more advantageous though it was, and I think that the sacrifice which I made deserves recompense. . . . I should be most obliged if you could fix me up on this matter as soon as possible, the more so since the delay in the arrangement of the commission which I claim would cause me to entertain serious prejudices.

In addition to the money he paid to the representative of another armament firm as the price of silence and to prevent competition, Seletzki made other payments to influence the Rumanian government. For an order from the Rumanian government amounting to fifteen billion lei, nearly four billion lei—that is, nearly 25 per cent—was paid in bribes by the Skoda Works. Dr. Lupu in his exposure made this statement to the Chamber: "One Minister received 600,000,000 lei, another 400,000,000, and finally a whole group received 700,000,000." Dr. Lupu was followed in the Rumanian Chamber by M. Coga, a former Minister, who showed that the armament firms concerned not only had been guilty of bribery, but had been "active in fomenting war scares and in persuading their own countries to adopt war-like policies and to increase their armaments."

True to the principle that competition can do no harm, armament and steel-and-iron manufacturers in the formerly Allied nations have generously cooperated with the German armament and steel industries and have helped Germany to evade the disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Issues of the *Official Monthly Bulletin for German Trade,* published by the Minister of Economics, show that German imports of iron, which during the first four months of 1932 amounted to 35,409 tons and during the first four months of 1933 to 208,802 tons, by the end of July had risen to approximately 400,000 tons. This iron is imported primarily from Belgium, whose average monthly export to Germany during 1932 was 2,000 tons, during 1933 25,000 tons. During the whole of the year 1931 Germany imported via Holland 8,300 tons of copper, while in the first six months of 1933 these imports amounted to 18,000 tons. During the whole of 1932 German imports of iron and copper minerals via Dutch ports amounted to 48,700 tons; by the end of July, 1933, they had risen to 71,000 tons. Imports via Dutch ports of pig iron for the production of steel rose from 27,000 tons during 1932 to 91,000 tons during the first six months of 1933.

The Krupp plant has for years been training a staff of artillery engineers. They have received their theoretical instruction at Essen and acquired some practical experience at the works of the Swedish Borfor Ordnance and Drydock Company, which is controlled by Krupp, and in the Krupp plants in the Ural. Krupp at this moment is manufacturing within Germany. Heavy guns of the Dicke Bertha type are tested at Meppen, and smaller 42-centimeter types are perfected at Jüterbog. The Rhein Metal Works at Düsseldorf and Sömmerda have just finished the construction of a colossal gun which is described as a "wonder of armanent technique" with respect to range, caliber, and explosive capacity.

Germany is the largest producer of chemicals in the world and has a monopoly of certain important chemicals. It would be a mere matter of hours to put Germany's chemical manufacturing resources at the services of the armament industry. For example, the I. G. Farben, the great chemical trust, produces in its laboratories more than a thousand different kinds of poison gas. The chemical factories of Von Heyden at Radebeul, Dresden, are now occupied with the production of an organic oxygen as well as of light invisible gases of a composition unknown up to now. The firm of Billwarder at Hamburg Billbrock can easily change from the production of chromoxyd to the production of the terrible arsenic gases.

Not only the business of the Continental armament makers is booming; British firms also are getting their full share. The Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., Britain's biggest poison-gas maker, has been able for three consecutive years to increase its profits annually by an average of 30 per cent. During 1932 the increase of profits over 1931 amounted

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to £1,320,782, or almost 40 per cent. This industry, if not actually subsidized by the British government, is actively assisted by the British Chemical Warfare Defense Department, which has for three years past had an annual budget of £135,000. Further research is carried out at British universities, where research workers are subsidized by the government. The United States spends approximately $400,000 annually on chemical-warfare research.

In South America wars have been kept going solely for the benefit of the munition makers; it is certain, for example, that the wars between Bolivia and Paraguay and between Peru and Colombia could never have continued if the international armament makers had not poured arms into those countries, which have no industries of their own capable of turning out war material.

British armament makers and traders have recently sold armaments to the following South American countries:

Bolivia: from January, 1932, to January, 1934, 2,750,816 rounds of ammunition; 99 machine-guns; 6 tanks; spare parts of machinery.

Paraguay: from January, 1932, to January, 1934, 28,514,000 cartridges mainly for rifle use; 90 ammunition belts.

Peru: from January, 1933, to January, 1934, 239,000 cartridges; 18,000 fuses; 12,000 rounds of ammunition; 18 aircraft machine-guns; 46 bomb carriers.

Colombia: from January, 1933, to January, 1934, 710,000 cartridges; 4,000 kilograms of T.N.T.; 290 fuse lighters.

German armament makers, mainly through the agency of Benny Spiro, the arms merchant of Berlin, who is hated in England for having furnished the arms for the Ulster rebellion, delivered during 1933 the following munitions to South America:

Peru: 10,000 rifles; 400,000 cartridges; 6,000 rounds of ammunition; 12 mounted machine-guns.

Paraguay: 3,000,000 cartridges; 20 ammunition belts; 6 mounted machine-guns.

Colombia: 250,000 cartridges; 2,000 kilograms T.N.T.; 6 anti-aircraft machine-guns.

Nor have the Far Eastern markets been neglected. There, as in South America, wars could have been ended or limited if the Bloody International had not kept on pouring war materials into Japan and into the different sections of China. It is difficult to arrive at correct figures concerning the sales of arms to the Far East. In December, 1933, the French and German armament manufacturers and dealers signed at Geneva an agreement providing for the effective cartellization of the Far Eastern arms markets. Under this agreement the sales organizations of the French and German armament industries are pooled, and as a result there is little publicity in Europe for the sales. This procedure is no matter for surprise, for French and German armament makers and the steel and coal industrialists of the two countries have been cooperating for many decades. This cooperation did not even stop during the war, but reached dimensions which would have meant the conviction for high treason of any lesser citizen of these countries accused of such practices. To come back to the Far Eastern market: in 1933 English firms exported to China 38,000,000 Mauser cartridges, 52,000 smoke cartridges, 310,000 rifle cartridges, 140,000 revolver cartridges, 45,000 automatic rifles, 800 automatic revolvers, 301 rifles, 45 machine-guns, 6 standard guns, and 200,000 kilograms of T.N.T.

There has always been a strong military friendship between Germany and Japan; only last December the representatives of the Japanese and Polish General Staffs met at Berlin in a conference with the German General Staff. This strong friendship, however, has not prevented Germany from sending, during the three years ending in February, 1934, some eighty-five staff officers to China. It is important to note that most of these officers were not put at the disposal of Chiang Kai-chek's government at Nanking, which has been actively corrupted by the Japanese, but were sent to assist the revolutionary governments of South China. Nevertheless, Nanking did not hesitate to keep a representative in Berlin during the period of war with Japan to deal with the arms traffic from Germany. This officer bought vast supplies of explosives—explosive gelatine, capsules, nitroglycerine, T.N.T., black powder—guns, revolvers, and machine-gun cartridges. The vessels which brought these cargoes to China invariably flew the flag of Norway. The United States had small share in the business, though in 1933 Nanking bought forty-two Curtiss-Hawk single-seater fighting planes. The main profits for American industries from the Far Eastern situation have come from Japan. For the past three years Japan has increased annually her purchases of raw cotton by an average of 35 per cent, not to mention a purchase of 100 per cent more kerosene oil, 40 per cent more crude petroleum, 25 per cent more lead, and 12 per cent more steel. The Manchurian military adventure has so far cost Japan not less than one billion yen, and while Japan is naturally doing all it can to make its home industries profit from this terrific expenditure, up to now more than 40 per cent of this money has left the country.

During 1932 and 1933 Japan bought from Great Britain 2,400 machine-guns and some 14,000,000 cartridges of various descriptions. The figures from the Continent are more difficult to obtain because of the Franco-German agreement not to publish any sales to the Far East, but it may be noted that the Japanese military attaché at Paris has rooms permanently engaged at the testing ranges of the firms of Schneider-Creusot and the Société Hotchkiss. The Czecho-Slovakian armament industry is almost entirely controlled by Schneider-Creusot of France and is also subject to the cartellization agreement. Nevertheless, the following shipments among many others were made to Japan from Czecho-Slovakia during 1932 and 1933:

300 aeroplane machine-guns at the price of £140 each.

10 batteries of four Böhler field guns with a caliber of 7.65 centimeters.

40 light tanks, latest type, with 26 horse-power motors giving 2,000 revolutions per minute, speed 40 miles per hour, chromium-steel-plated, total weight of the tank 2,000 kilograms.

10,000 aeroplane bombs assorted in weights of 25, 50, and 100 kilograms.

3,000,000 Mauser cartridges, and also hand grenades, flame-throwers, and one shipload of spare parts, most of this material having been shipped through the port of Hamburg.

I could adduce many similar facts but these few are sufficient to show conclusively that there would be fewer wars if there were fewer armament makers.

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In the Driftway

THE Drifter is passionately indifferent to sports. The mere thought of either watching or taking part in any game produces in him almost indescribable weariness which is rather spiritual than muscular, and he tends, on the whole, to be proud of the fact. He has been known to garden mildly. He has also on occasion worked at a crossword puzzle. But he has never since reaching years of discretion played even a game of cards—to say nothing of a round of golf—and when he puts all these facts together he is inclined to conclude that the thing which has been left out of him is the Competitive Spirit. Sometimes his friends call him lazy and he accepts the charge. It saves argument, and he feels, besides, that a certain indifference to the accusation is a becoming part of a Drifter's character. But in his heart he knows better. When he not only refuses to take part in a game of tennis but even turns his eyes away from the distressing spectacle afforded by his more thoughtless acquaintances, he is merely being true to his own profoundly pacifistic self. Contention—even of that mimic sort which, nevertheless, so easily assumes a certain distressing earnestness—offends him. He is not one of those who find it necessary to "fight for peace." He seeks no moral equivalent for war because no equivalent seems to him to be necessary. He is a pacifist of the purest sort, one whose pacifism consists simply in a disinclination to fight or even to contend. Perhaps, as enemies have suggested, this indicates merely a deficiency in the adrenal gland. The Drifter prefers to think instead that it is an admirable spiritual quality.

* * * * *

THIS is not, however, what he started out to say. He had in mind, on the contrary, certain philosophical reflections on the paradox inherent in the typical American's passion for sport as a subject for contemplation. And by contemplation he does not mean the sort indulged in by the thousands who go wherever it is that they do go to watch what he believes is called a "big league" baseball game, but rather that purer sort indulged in by that much larger group whose members seldom if ever actually see such a game but who follow with passionate and proud interest the statistics published in the daily papers. Many of them, so the Drifter is informed, pore over the tables of batting averages and are ready at any moment to quote the figures on any prominent player. Yet they are commonly persons of the tired-business-man type who look with suspicion on "intellectual interests" and who seem never to realize that they are themselves indulging in an amusement of a highly abstract kind. Comparatively speaking, a game of chess played by mail is almost a physical conflict, and tiddledy-winks a brutal pastime calculated to bring out all of man's hidden ferocity.

* * * * *

THE paradox lies in the fact that Americans think of themselves as a practical people with little respect for anything not primarily utilitarian. They like to dismiss all abstract speculation and all pure art with a "what is it good for" or a "where will it get you." Yet the typical American is a man with an ardent and almost purely intellectual interest in the outcome of a series of games in which nothing tangible is at stake and which he never comes in contact with except through the medium of literature and statistics. The Drifter sometimes reads ancient history. The Arian heresy is, as a matter of fact, a sort of specialty of his. But he gets no feeling of superiority from the fact. His concern cannot possibly be any more completely disinterested than that of your hard-headed man of business who seizes a paper on the way home from work to find out whether or not Babe Ruth struck a homer during the afternoon.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

We Guess We Do

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Last year you wanted to know why I failed to renew my subscription. I replied that I was disgusted with *The Nation's* inability to see through the worthless alternating-current liberal-conservatives like Nicholas Murray Butler, whom it praises one day and denounces the next. Nevertheless, I later resubscribed.

Now *The Nation* has damned itself forever by publishing Mr. Krutch's review of "Stevedore." Even the critics of the daily newspapers recovered from their propaganda-forbidding views of "Peace on Earth" to see "Stevedore" in a more favorable light. But brave Krutch stands steadfast in his lonely intellectual tower. He finds "Stevedore" nothing less than an "incitement to riot." With its publication of this review *The Nation,* despite its regular stream of liberal words, is revealed standing with the police and the company police, with the army, and with capitalism and imperialism, playing the same role here that the Kerenskyites and Mensheviki played in Russia. Those associated with *The Nation* should realize this and ask themselves on which side of the barricade they intend to be found—with Krutch and *The Nation* trembling before "Stevedore" and its presage of revolution, or with the stevedores.

It is a pity that *The Nation* cannot bury its dead. When Krutch gratuitously handed "Men in White" the Pulitzer prize, he proved himself ready for burial. Here is a play with no reds, and yet the professor was unable to see through the shiny white uniforms to the cheap melodrama beneath.

I guess by now you realize that when my subscription runs out again, there is no hope for renewal.

New York, April 28 R. V. S.

Mr. Buck Passes the Onion

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to read your publication, and also to inform you that it will not be profitable to either of us to continue mailing it to me. While I hold no brief for unethical business, big or little, and certainly cannot be accused of ever having either in person or in my family history acquired any wealth which needs "redistribution," I am frank to say that I have more respect for a business or business man, big or little, who is frankly and openly "after the dollar," than I have for union organizers, soap-box or corner orators, and others who derive livelihood and even competence from pandering to and fattening upon the lower impulses of the mundane man, which are only too prevalent in all of us.

Publications of your stripe advocate nothing that is not

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founded on the passions of hate, envy, laziness, and greed; and they endeavor to establish a basic statement of fact, than which the human mind has never conceived one more utterly false and destructive—to wit, that a government such as that conceived and developed in our United States owes everyone a job or a living or a chance to work.

No government owes anyone anything, that is, no Republican government, except to see to it that no individual or combination of individuals under governmental or association form deprives a single one of its citizens of the fruits of such labor as such citizen may lawfully perform for himself.

The trouble with you and all of your feeling is that you have not the faintest conception of the inspired form of government, hailing as I believe direct from the Creative Power itself, whatever one may choose to call it, or however one may choose to ignore it, which established itself for the first time in human history, so far as known history goes, on this portion of this continent, as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

From casually glancing through your columns, I fail to find anything interesting to such intelligence as I possess. Such publication as yours are like the magazines the newsboys used to peddle in smoking cars in whispers, but which now appear in worse type in every schoolgirl's hand. The reader's first impression is a thrill all right, but the first thrill is the last, for there is after all but one sense appealed to.

Friday Harbor, Washington, May 1 SAM R. BUCK

From One Who Really "Thinks"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In your issue of May 9 under the heading of Gentile Silver you made a most vicious attack upon Father Coughlin for his attack on the international banker, and you very cleverly tried to arouse race hatred by implying that he was, in an underhanded way, referring to the Jews as a whole. In the first place, you seem to feel that he has no right to attempt to counteract that propaganda which has been used so successfully by the international banker for the past fifty years. I know of no periodical which has been doing more propaganda work than your own. But Father Coughlin must have been hammering on a very sore spot as far as you are concerned. You have been pounding the silver legislation very hard of late, and it is only natural that you would avail yourselves of the first opportunity to try and discredit Father Coughlin.

You did not impart anything new to us when you referred to the fact that he had invested in silver, for we already knew that he had invested his surplus in commodities. I don't know that you ever took the trouble to mention those who profited by the act which doubled the price of gold. The international banker made plenty in that deal, and if the vast majority of those men happen to be Jews it does not necessarily follow that those of us who oppose them are attacking the Jews as a whole. What Father Coughlin has to say on all economic questions is not his own doctrine but that of the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, we have to use systems which are distasteful to us in our everyday life, but that is no reason for not doing our part to correct them. For instance, I know that the Wall Street gambling which makes it possible for a man to make millions over night is wrong and should be done away with, but as long as it is there, I would not hesitate to make mine if I could.

You are very anxious that the "thinking men of the country" should join you in your attack on Father Coughlin. I wonder why you delayed your campaign until he went off the air. I suppose it would be too much to expect you to publish a letter of this character, but I think you will find that such attacks will react against you, for your publication is so radical and vicious along different lines that those who really "think" will draw entirely different conclusions from yours. I feel sure that every slam from you will be a boost for the reverend gentleman.

New York, May 8 JOHN J. LOFTUS

Kind Words from a Friend

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

For approximately fifteen years I have been reading your magazine and have availed myself of savings made possible by subscribing for a period of several years at one time. My subscription will expire this coming August and I am already (owing to the depression) laying aside small sums to insure my receiving *The Nation* for three more years.

There are many reasons why *The Nation* has become a necessity to its subscribers. You no doubt are aware of most of the commoner ones. I question very much whether any magazine has a more competent and enlightened group of contributors or a superior board of editors.

The articles by Louis Fischer are always extremely interesting and time usually places its seal of approval upon their content. Paul Y. Anderson has given me many moments of elation because of his "rugged individualistic" method of saying things which should not be left unsaid and refusing to insinuate or deal in subtleties. Through various sources I read of the doings in Washington, but I must admit that his articles contain more actual information than all the others combined.

It has been my practice to pass on my copies of *The Nation* to others after having read them, believing that this procedure would indirectly recommend it to them without the objectionable features involved in praising something which can speak eloquently for itself if given an opportunity.

Chicago, April 29 SAMUEL HILLMAN

Contributors to This Issue

A. J. MUSTE is well-known as a labor leader. He is at present chairman of the Provisional Organizing Committee of the American Workers' Party.

HAROLD J. LASKI, professor of political science at the University of London, is the author of "Democracy in Crisis."

W. P. MORTENSON is assistant professor of agricultural economics at the University of Wisconsin.

CRISPIAN CORCORAN is the pseudonym of an American newspaperman who has lived many years in China.

JOHANNES STEEL was formerly an economic observer attached to the German Department of Commerce.

GLEN MULLIN is a member of the English Department of Columbia University.

BUCKMINSTER FULLER is the well-known engineer, the designer of the Dymaxion car.

ALEXANDER KAUN is associate professor of Slavic languages and literatures at the University of California.

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN, formerly an associate editor of *The Nation,* is now on the staff of the Baltimore *Sun.*

R. P. BLACKMUR has contributed verse and criticism to *Poetry, Hound and Horn,* and other magazines.

JAMES BURNHAM is professor of philosophy at Washington Square College, New York University.

JUDSON KING is the director of the National Popular Government League.

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Books and Films

She Said Too Little

By MARK VAN DOREN

She said too little, he too much.
She drooped; he could not droop enough.
Between a sigh, between a song,
Simplicity defeated both.

He was importunate with proof,
But undervalued then the pause.
She was judge of something else,
Something silent in the blood,

Something destined to be loud
If only words could fail and wait.
She never heard it; or explained
What sound is deeper than the throat.

They were not different save in this:
He paused too little, she too long.
But each was farther at the close
Than all northwest, and spreading storms.

A Challenge to American Artists

Modern Art. By Thomas Craven. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.

MANY years have elapsed since the famous Armory Show of 1913 introduced to America the anarchical tendencies in art known as modernism, and aroused the hysterical vituperations of an outraged and embattled academic officialdom which the passing of time has failed to mollify. The sponsors of the new movement have retorted in kind. In the end academic art has been badly riddled, and modernism has achieved substantial triumphs in that, in one form or another, it has profoundly affected the younger generation of painters. Thomas Craven in his brilliant and provocative new book, "Modern Art," has pronounced a pox on both their houses. During his formative period Mr. Craven's sympathies resided definitely with the left wing. Because of his personal contacts, his well-digested learning, his critical shrewdness and fine understanding of the enduring values in art, he is the ideal commentator upon the forces which have been at work since the impressionists.

It is no exaggeration to say that Mr. Craven has anatomized the new men and the new movements with a penetration hitherto unmatched by any historian or critic of our time. He strips their solemn pretentiousness from the abstractionists, the sur-realists, the snob artists, the Bohemian cults which make art out of other art in a world where the fresh impulses of life never penetrate. If his ultimate appraisal of the achievements of modernism gives small comfort to the radicals, it gives even less to the traditionalists, whose painting "has ceased to be work and has become genteel behavior." As Mr. Craven belabors the artists with malicious glee, the patient, long-suffering layman who has been patronized, snubbed, and shocked for so many years will feel that here at last is aesthetic doctrine as friendly to him almost as a glass of beer. He is assured that significant painting is not hocus-pocus; it has its roots deep in the life experience of the painter and reveals its message in forms which all can understand. This the layman has dimly suspected all along.

Thus is the keynote of Mr. Craven's book boldly sounded:

> I have considered art as a human activity, as a healthy form of labor proceeding from, and affecting, the lives of people. I cannot, therefore, accept technical experiments in structure as substitutes for experience; nor can I credit the transcendental values read into Picasso's abstract patterns by his hypersensitive stockholders. Nor can I accept as valid experiences the hallucinations of the sur-realists who distort the facts of life to suit their little nightmares. I have no use for an art that is founded upon the limited attention of specialists, or upon the eccentricities of monomaniacs; I ask that art contain meanings which may be verified, shared, and enjoyed by a large and intelligent audience. With this in mind I have had to recognize the fact that a picture is not only a composition, a material thing neatly put together, but a representation of something, a symbol, if you will; and that the art of painting attains to prominence when its symbolism reveals notions, ideas, tendencies, and values rising from the *mores* of the time.

For art's loss of social function, Mr. Craven insists that Bohemian Paris is largely to blame; out of the stuffy, self-perpetuating studio painting of Montmartre and the Latin Quarter was born the present Ecole de Paris. Bohemia has been a pestilence to art with its lazy dilettantes, its tawdry romances and illusions. It has fostered nothing vital—only febrile aesthetic inbreeding and eventual impotence. One of the most persuasive sponsors of Bohemia was Whistler. "He was the ambassador of Bohemia to the Anglo-Saxons. . . . His painting was a Bohemian art, a thing of compilations without guts or substance." Out of Bohemia blossomed the neurotic charm of Modigliani, the eclectic skill of Picasso. The painting of Picasso is ruthlessly analyzed in one of Mr. Craven's most illuminating chapters.

> Like Gertrude Stein, his friend and imitator, Picasso has not risen above the childish play with materials. These twin exotics are prize exemplars of the infantilism of Bohemia: their greatest delight is to play with bits of material, and, then, as an afterthought, to attach meanings to their wilful combinations. Such play is possible only in segregated corners of the world where the artist, like the child, is free from economic and social responsibilities —where in truth, he is not above life but beneath it. Picasso, like a spoilt child, tears pictures to shreds and patches—the good art of the past, anything that pleases his fancy—and pieces them together again.

From Bohemia Cézanne escaped, but out of the implications of his aesthetic theory the Bohemians constructed abstract art. Cézanne is historically important because of his repudiation of the impressionists and his insistence upon the "necessity for correlation, that is, for formal order, for conscientious planning, for a scheme of relationships by means of which forms may be brought together in a rhythmical unit." His art, though, was "meager and unfulfilled." He was not big enough to achieve the qualities he admired in the old masters. As intermediaries between Cézanne and the present Ecole de Paris, Mr. Craven presents vivid sketches of Van Gogh and Gauguin, discussing their essential gifts and shortcomings with singular understanding. Van Gogh's fanatical paintings "burn; they have the restless vitality of the flame, but like the flame they are wanting in substance. They appeal to our rarer moods, and unless one is capable of those moods, they are interesting only as specimens of abnormal mortification." Gauguin had a fine color sense and was a skilful pattern-maker but he was no true primitive. His so-called savagery was only a superficial tattoo on a romantic *fin de siècle* Frenchman. He fashioned mumbo-jumbo stage properties for picturesque effects, "hell-bent on playing the bogy man."

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After flattening out Matisse, who is characterized as a prosperous wall-paper designer, and disinterring the corpse of cubism in order to trace the ravages of a fatal malady, Mr. Craven examines the work of certain artists on this side of the Atlantic who have left the unrealities of Bohemia behind and, moved by the potentialities of the American scene, are creating freshly and vigorously out of first-hand experience. John Steurat Curry, Reginald Marsh, John Sloan, Thomas Benton are heralded as pioneers plowing the soil for the new crop of native art which in time may spring up.

The book may be epitomized as a super-challenge to American artists to come out from behind their French whiskers and paint American. One feels that the author has gazed with profound dismay upon the Gallic aping and posturing of American painters these many years. The situation has called for strong language, and he has mustered all his resources of invective, sarcasm, and contempt in order to sting his reader into a sharp awareness of a sad, sad spectacle. As in "Men of Art," he displays his gifts as a witty gossip, an engaging raconteur. He has written a violent, bad-mannered book which to all true lovers of art will bring obscene delight.

GLEN MULLIN

The Growth of a New World

Technics and Civilization. By Lewis Mumford. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.50.

SCIENCE often makes the front page now in heartening juxtaposition to patronage and recovery news. Nevertheless, the average man seldom reads a scientific book unless it inspires in him the sense that he is taking a correspondence-school course in moral improvement, and Lewis Mumford recognizes the fact. He takes the viewpoint of Science herself; he chronicles in easy steps her progress from a merely whimsical view of the external world to a specific and then to a quantitative one. But he gives so many examples and quotes so often what Mr. X says that the reader is more likely to be convinced that so learned a man as Mr. Mumford must be right than he is to develop his own alertness in the presence of a simply revealed truth.

There are 64 pages of index, notes, and bibliography for 435 pages of text. This statistical observation is made to explain the statement that properly to comprehend Mr. Mumford's point of view a residence would have to be taken up in the New York Public Library for six months. He no sooner leads the reader into the development of an awakening thought than he suddenly breaks the trend of the developed thought by reference to what Oop or Doop had to say in one of the many centuries to which he continually refers. The scene shifts so frequently in years as to become almost a primary diversion of the book. "Just where are we now in time or space, and which of which?"

Again, without direct mechanical experience himself, and with far too slight attention to the part played by mathematics in the development of the mechanical instruments, Mr. Mumford relates without blushing the inside story of the inspiration of inventors, obscure or otherwise. So often the reason seems to the reader to lack validity that those who have themselves experienced the phenomena cited must be made somewhat suspicious of the whole discourse.

Despite these limitations of his work Mr. Mumford is to be congratulated for undertaking so complete and provocative a treatise on a subject which must be mastered if society is to find a happy realization of the extraordinary potentialities of today. He gives, indeed, a complete account of the continuous process by which a growth-and-motion world has evolved out of a static one. He also clearly reveals his own prejudice in favor of the dynamic equilibrium now about to emerge, though he waits until his closing words to say: "The issue is not decided; the results are not certain; and where in the present chapter I have used the prophetic form I have not been blind to the fact that while all the tendencies and movements I have pointed to are real, they are still far from being supreme; so when I have said 'it will' I have meant 'we must.'" Whether Mr. Mumford's prejudice in favor of certain solutions is harmonic and synchronizable with the whole situation may be questioned, but a conscientious and sustained attempt to reveal the sum total of experience and knowledge which lead to one's prejudices must expedite growth either through enthusiastic acceptance or provocation.

BUCKMINSTER FULLER

Soviet Literature

Soviet Literature: An Anthology. Edited and Translated by George Reavey and Marc Slonim. Covici-Friede. $2.50.

THE most authentic means for knowing Russia is still found, as before the revolution, in its literature, which continues to be the focus of the national mind and its quintessential expression. There has been, however, a marked change in the writer's approach to his subject matter, Russian life. Gone is the normal tempo which permitted the author to observe life at elbow's length, to analyze and introspect, to diagnose and prognosticate, and by the same token to teach, to guide, to prophesy. The whirling events of the last two decades have proved too overwhelming to be recorded in their totality. Alexander Blok's symphonic poem, "The Twelve," is still the only composition that suggests the scope, complexity, and pregnancy of the October revolution. On the whole, life has overtaken literature. Formerly Turgenev's Bazarov could appear in the pages of a novel before an actual Nihilist walked in life. Others, notably Andreyev and Artzibashev, anticipated or evoked types and groups. Nowadays even retrospection taxes the writer's imagination. The writer today is constrained to be more modest and humble than his predecessor. He can hardly hope to be more than fragmentary, episodic, and factual in recording an infinitesimal fraction of the grand epoch.

Soviet fiction, of which the Reavey-Slonim anthology gives a fair sample, mirrors the high lights of the last seventeen years. A new set of *mores* has sprung up against the background of war, revolution, intervention, blockade, famine, epidemics, and such leapfrog stages as militant communism, the NEP, the Piatiletkas. A shifting of standards, of means and goals, is taking place. The old is doomed, but it refuses to die painlessly. Hence clash and conflict, problems of the family, the child, the woman, sex, youth, the individual versus the collective, the village, the army, the one hundred and odd nationalities. Decidedly this life has been too bewilderingly multiple to be coped with otherwise than in small and specific doses.

To be sure, an anthology, like a cafeteria, offers too much and too little. Inevitable gaps, arbitrariness in the selection of authors and their works, the brief excerpts from novels and essays, combine to leave the reader with an unsatisfied feeling. At the same time this is the first book to offer a comprehensive survey of the field, sufficient to give one an idea of the scope, quality, and dominant tendencies of Soviet belles-lettres. Mr. Slonim's introductory essay is a lucid guide through the labyrinth of Russia's literary schools from the symbolists almost to our day. Almost—for so swift is the tempo of the U. S. S. R. that this survey, written as late as 1933, fails to include the latest school, officially sanctioned and supported by the best authors and critics, namely, "socialist realism."

This term is elastic and comprehensive, and is applied both

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to current works and, retrospectively, to the Soviet fiction that has survived party slogans and propaganda posters. It is an attempted synthesis of the important literary efforts since the beginning of the century. Reality is approached with the traditional Russian truthfulness and thoroughness, but the style shows the effects of the symbolist school and is refreshingly unpedestrian in form and imagery. The language is jealously free from clichés; it is direct and imbued with the tension and tempo of the new life. Realism is blended with romanticism in the portrayal of the pathos and heroism of the struggle for a new order. One even hears occasionally a messianic note. The brutal starkness and crude expressionism of early Soviet fiction, used in protest against Russian introspection and psychology, have worn off their rough edges. Today one recognizes once more the tradition of Dostoevski and Tolstoy. With this difference, however, that the individual is not treated as an isolated entity in conflict with society. Through the eyes of the individual, through his actions and reactions, we are shown the collective environment and its problems. One of the most burning of these problems is the quest after harmony between the individual and the mass.

ALEXANDER KAUN

Raw Material

The Menace of Japan. By T. O'Conroy. H. C. Kinsey and Company. $3.

SOME day, many of our prophets say, the United States will fight Japan. When that day comes we shall very likely see another Committee on Public Information established in Washington to feed the American public ghastly, revolting tales concerning the wickedness of the Japanese. This will be done on the theory that it is only by whipping up mob passions and mob hatred that a war can be successfully conducted. But the propaganda committee will find its job an easy one. It need only turn to Professor O'Conroy's book. For between the covers of this readable and persuasive work may be found all the raw material any Japanese-atrocity mill would ever require.

Willis J. Abbott once called those foreign correspondents who deal mainly in diplomatic sensations "international window-smashers." Taid O'Conroy, though not a journalist, may be placed in the same category. He lived fifteen years in Japan; married a Japanese girl; was for a time on the faculty of Keio University in Tokio, and later held positions in the Imperial Naval Staff College, in night schools, and in technical organizations. According to his publishers, he "lived in a circle almost exclusively Japanese. To all outward appearances he adopted their way of living. . . . During his vacations he went among the farmers of the country, among the priests, and into out-of-the-way parts of the empire to secure a grasp of the complete range of Japanese life."

It is essential that his background be emphasized, for the tales he has to tell are for the most part incredible. He literally accuses the Japanese of every manner of crime and perversion that could conceivably be attributed to a modern nation. Coming from any other source, his work would have to be dismissed as a spiteful fantasy. The Japanese, the author declares, consider themselves the chosen of heaven; all other peoples are barbarians. Therefore they believe that they are destined to rule the world. This is their national religion, Shintoism, the faith of every Japanese man, woman, and child. But they are woefully low in intellect, purposely kept so by the few strong men who really rule the empire. "It is the mentality," says the author, "of a primitive tribe that has been trained in modern warfare, that has had the results of a Western mechanical civilization thrust suddenly upon them. But it is more convincing. Behind the superficial veneer is that *knowledge* of a divine right to rule the world, the awareness of their superiority over other peoples of the universe, and this has made them a race of religious fanatics whose God is Japan."

More than that, "they take delight in cruelty and bloodshed," and their "passion for blood is not confined to the admiration of political or patriotic murder." Professor O'Conroy cites scores of examples: the massacre of thousands of Koreans after the earthquake of 1923, the innumerable atrocities reported by neutral observers during the battle of Shanghai in January, 1932, the public torturing of animals. Corruption and blackmailing in business life as well as in politics are commonplace, the author asserts; "Japan is corrupt from one end to the other." The priesthood is no better; Professor O'Conroy describes the scandalous thievery of the priests and mentions certain sexual and other orgies that are indescribable. Conditions among the workers are set forth in detail. Thousands of factory girls are not even wage slaves, but apparently receive no wages at all. Indeed, when he gets to the Japanese attitude toward women the author piles up an immense and useful store of ammunition for our future propagandists. Rape seems to be a universal practice and what we know as the white-slave traffic a major industry. Brothels bring in heavy returns to respected business men and are encouraged by public officials because they provide a lucrative source of revenue. The Japanese wife is really a hand-servant to her husband, constantly at his beck and call, and must even wait upon the geishas and prostitutes whom he may and often does bring into their home.

How much of Professor O'Conroy's story is true, how much the product of an overripe imagination? Unhappily, the most distressing aspect of this lurid recital is that it appears on the whole to be well substantiated. The author has carefully documented many of his accusations, quoting at length several reputable Japanese writers, such as Inazo Nitobe and S. Washio. In addition, one may find confirmation of many of his allegations in the writings of G. C. Allen, Harold S. Quigley, Basil Matthews, Payson J. Treat, General William S. Graves, and other Anglo-Saxon authorities whose sobriety and intellectual integrity cannot be questioned. However, these writers have not gone out of their way to stress the faults and failings of the Japanese, but have given each characteristic of the people, whether good or bad, its proper place and proportion.

That Japan is a menace to the peace of the world no one who has observed Far Eastern events during the last several years can well deny. But that the menace arises from the fact that the Japanese may be a debased and vicious people, as Professor O'Conroy alleges, is not so certain. If one were to examine more carefully than this author has done the historic and economic background of the Japanese, one would very likely find much sounder and more plausible reasons for the "menace" here discussed. It might even be possible, as the result of such examination, to show that the same factors which are making Japan a threat to world peace have aided in fashioning the Japanese character, of which the author depicts only the worst possible side. Japan is quite obviously suffering from an inferiority complex and has a grave and probably insoluble economic problem before it. The same in a broad sense is true of the Germany of today. It can hardly be considered accidental that we should detect many of the Japanese traits, their sadism, their intense nationalism, their worship of race, among the Hitlerites. But no serious student has thought of attributing the perversions of Hitlerism to any inherent or irremediable defects in the German character; instead they have been traced to economic and political causes. It appears that Professor O'Conroy did not consider it necessary to inquire into the deeper economic and political aspects of the Japanese problem. At any rate he has merely put together a mess of surface facts in making this rabble-rousing book.

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

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Convention in Flight

All Trivia. By Logan Pearsall Smith. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

THE art of aphorism, especially in that branch which flows neither from religion nor philosophy but rather from a deliberately mundane, and literary, experience alone, is limited by a curiously thin quality of conventionality. An aphorism, being brief, is in itself disengaged, naked, and without a context, and thus with the best intentions of pointing a definite object, it always runs the risk of hitting nothing but a thin air of words: an instance of what the well-informed lady in Mr. Smith's preface meant but could not exemplify when she mentioned the "fastidious people who polish and polish until there is nothing left." In short, if you are to get any good of him, you must pretty well agree with your aphorist before you read him. You must assume that you know the context in life of the observations he makes, and you must assume that you know his point of view toward the foibles which are his targets. You must assume this knowledge but you do not need to possess it. That is the character and the success of this kind of conventionality.

On his part the aphorist must help you by surprising you a little—but not too much. He can seldom, for example, afford the grotesque or risk turning your stomach; such things have to be guaranteed by specific rendering or eloquence of insight beyond the terms of the convention. But he is at liberty, or indeed under the necessity, to resort to some slight, surprising turn of speech, some classical trope, some sly indication that you, the reader, are the real cushion for his pin. On the whole, however, the aphorist must persist in an assumption of snobbish equality; you and he are really much alike in your worldly frailties and thereby a little superior; and this in the long run is the best road to platitude. But your aphorist, if he is any good, either avoids platitude by understating it or escapes it in apparent paradox.

The whole point is this: your literary aphorist neither plumbs nor expresses human character; rather he ornaments and elegantly quickens a conventional view of it. It is, so to speak, convention in flight. Mr. Smith's literary aphorisms are in the line of La Rochefoucauld, only less malicious, and of La Bruyère, only less organic; he has less knowledge of the world than either, and therefore, perhaps, less sympathy with himself. But thus, on the other hand, his wit is freer and its flights more delightfully irrelevant. For the willing reader he should always afford a distinct pleasure: the knowledge of life without its burdens.

R. P. BLACKMUR

John Middleton Murry

The Necessity of Communism. By John Middleton Murry. Thomas Seltzer. $1.50.

I REMEMBER, some years ago at Oxford, going to a lecture by John Middleton Murry. It was during the time of his controversy with Eliot over "intelligence," and there was a large crowd of literary undergraduates and the usual townspeople. He talked—a small man with large tortoise-shell glasses—an hour and a half or more, about the Parable of the Prodigal Son and John Keats. He made, to those who were willing for the time to lull their strict logical sense, who were not annoyed by having it proved that the New Testament was pure poetry and Keats revealed Scripture, a number of illuminating remarks. After the talk there were questions by the audience. These were nominal, until a graduate student near me rose with a sheaf of notes fresh from the study of Keats's Letters. He quoted from Keats statements disproving Murry's central thesis. Murry evaded by an answer "on a higher plane" than logic. The graduate student persisted. A look of pain, almost of suffering, crossed Murry's face. He took out his watch, and apologized to the audience at large: "I am sorry not to be able to go on with this most significant point, but I must get my train for London."

I tell this rather pointless story because it is true, and because it sums up so much about Murry. He is an Old Testament prophet in tortoise-shell glasses, a poet who cannot rhyme, a philosopher who cannot think; he overflows himself. I am not playing with names: there is in Murry real prophetic fervor, but it is dissipated in clouds of merely *personal* emotion; there is true poetic insight, but no disciplined medium to body it forth; there are glimpses of profound thought, but an inability to reason doggedly, as a philosopher must, to analyze through to the logical heart.

Consequently, it is not enough to dismiss Murry, as this carefully read Oxford student afterwards dismissed him. He is more than Aldous Huxley's Burlap. It is not enough to dismiss him; but it is even more fatal really to believe in him. Our prophets must speak from a fuller and more authentic revelation.

It would not be hard to tear apart "The Necessity of Communism." The extravagant, unresolved paradoxes, the grandiose over-simplifications, the elementary fallacies, the historical nonsense, are so easily vulnerable. But we should tear also a good deal that ought to be preserved. For the truth is that Murry *has* a "message," and the confused obscurities of its origin do not necessarily make it any the less true and imperative.

For a long time now Murry has been seeking—so far as he is sincere, so far as he is not Burlap—personal salvation. To this consuming end he has directed the memories of his dead wife, his readings of the New Testament, his whole concern with Christ, St. Francis, Blake, Keats, Lawrence. In "The Necessity of Communism" he records the furthest advance he has made on the road to salvation. The book is addressed to his fellow middle-class intellectuals. The "message" is simply this: We, the middle-class intellectuals, have today one chance, and only one chance, for salvation. We must make the full renunciation. We must become, in ethical aim and intellectual outlook and practical activity, complete Communists. No avoiding of the issue, no halfway measure, is any longer possible. Any other solution whatever is spiritual corruption.

The message is put, throughout the book, in religious, or rather evangelical, language that will no doubt, and on the whole rightly, be offensive to orthodox Communists. This whole matter of the "religion of communism" needs clarification. There is one very important similarity between communism and religion: the active—not merely academic or habitual—believer in communism, like the active believer in a religious faith, is often able to achieve what might be called a full "integration of the personality." I take it that this is what Murry means, in his own way, by "personal salvation"—certainly he does not mean a promise of reward in a supernatural heaven. This integration of the personality is surely worth being serious about. Nevertheless, the danger of talking about communism in religious terms is that in every other important respect it differs radically from what we normally—though in this Murry is unlike the rest of us—mean by religion: in the objective content of its beliefs, in its rejection of the supernatural, in its method of approaching both theoretic and practical problems, in its attitude toward science, in the virtues it implicitly emphasizes.

I do not mean to be making a rigid distinction between abstract "subjective" aspects, in which communism and religion

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are alike, and "objective" aspects, in which they differ. The matter is not so simple as that. A full integration of the personality cannot be gained simply by taking up the handiest doctrine that may be around. And this is a truth that Murry

definition of Marxism is worth study. Marxism is two things: it is the ethical passion of disinterested action, and it is the intellectual passion of disinterested seeing; it is a morality of self-dedication to a revolutionary cause, and it is a doctrine of historical materialism." This, in turn, leads to the decision: "Ethical passion, to be effective, must await an objective situation appropriate to itself. And Marx, and Marx alone, with profound prophetic insight, saw that this crucial moment in history had arrived." Lastly, I should like to quote a remark addressed as cogently to Americans—and Frenchmen and Germans—as to Murry's countrymen: "Each country will get the Marxism it deserves." The moral tone should not hide entirely the historic meaning.

JAMES BURNHAM

Larger than Life

Magnus Merriman. By Eric Linklater. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

Finnley Wren. By Philip Wylie. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

I THINK Farrar and Rinehart should be taken to task for the extravagance of their blurbs. Here are two minor novels, one by a young Scotsman, the other by a young American. They are both fairly entertaining. They have wit, learning, passion, and a little poetry, but the publisher's ecstasies are decidedly out of keeping with the merit of the novels. The jacket of "Magnus Merriman" reads like a litany of literary saints: "Gargantuan comedy . . . Tristram Shandy, Gargantua, Don Quixote, and Falstaff . . . the language of Shakespeare brought up to date." The list for "Finnley Wren" is briefer but not more modest. A flamboyant headline in large script announces: "At Last! A Book in the Spirit of Sterne and Rabelais. . . ." If one chose to go on one might add Huxley and James Branch Cabell to "Magnus Merriman's" credit, and Anatole France and Tiffany Thayer to "Finnley Wren's"—comparisons as suitable, if not as complimentary.

Naturally, all this name-conjuring has a basis in fact. Both novels are frankly derivative from, though not "fit to stand beside," some of the aforementioned masters. Magnus Merriman and Finnley Wren are heroes in the old style—extraordinary, gusty, rollicking men, larger than life. Tragic buffoons, both, they cut a wide swath in the world. Their adventures are numerous and remarkable. Magnus's take him from soldiering in India and journalism in America to politics in Scotland and, at last, to a farm in Orkney and a country wife. Finnley's experiences are of a more private nature, but they are extensive and startling enough. They include two strange marriages, a forest fire in Canada, and a career as a high-powered advertising executive in New York. Both men detest the modern world and find their only real satisfaction in violent physical activity. They are inveterate talkers, drinkers, and fornicators. Indeed, Linklater's book might be said to be steeped in alcohol, Wylie's in sex.

From Rabelais and Sterne, Wylie and Linklater have taken also a passion for rhetoric, for strange words and highly colored metaphors. Linklater's rhetoric, however, has been curbed and compressed into neat, ironic sentences, while Wylie's bursts forth with a little of the vitality of Rabelais himself. In "Finnley Wren" you will find coined words, technical words, archaic words heaped upon each other with fine prodigality. Linklater minces along, picking his way carefully, caressing each innuendo, each delicate shade of meaning. His book is appallingly self-conscious. The consistently over-perfect prose style has turned a novel which is at times truly robust and humorous into a cheap display of virtuosity, a small piece of exhibitionism. "Magnus Merriman," moreover, adheres far too closely to the recent past. Its story technique is one of familiar, plodding realism. One is introduced to the hero in school. One follows him religiously, step by step, throughout his adventures. One leaves him when they end. It is all a little stodgy.

Wylie's faults are of a different order. His style I have already mentioned; his experiments with the time shift and the shift in point of view are new and frequently exciting. But he lacks one quality which the Scottish author possesses above all else—literary taste. In the more emotional moments of "Finnley Wren" and in the depiction of contemporary New York life, Wylie can stoop to a sensationalism which is as vulgar as anything Tiffany Thayer ever employed to titillate the public. The book, in general, is rich and lively enough for one to overlook these excesses. It is so good that one could heartily wish that Mr. Wylie could have exchanged a little of his superb carelessness for a measure of Mr. Linklater's excellent taste.

MARY MCCARTHY

The Utility Muddle

The Valuation and Regulation of Public Utilities. By John H. Gray and Jack Levin. Harper and Brothers. $1.

THOSE who desire to know the stern truth as to why we are where we are in the utility muddle can find help in this little book of 143 pages by Dr. Gray and Dr. Levin. The facts and the conclusions here set down come not out of study alone or the field of action alone but from that best of combinations, genuine scholarship and practical experience. Dr. Gray, in addition to his wide university connections, was for years with the Bureau of Valuation of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and is a past president of the American Economic Association. Dr. Levin is a public-utility lawyer, at present the Chief of Legal Research of the NRA, and formerly valuation expert counsel to the Public Utilities Commission of Washington, D. C.

The book is written in an interesting and readable style,

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and unlike most discussions of this subject it does not avoid the stumps. For example, it points out frankly that one of the reasons for the failure of utility regulation by the State utility commissions has been the governing decisions of the United States Supreme Court. The crux of these decisions for the past half-century is given in plain language and carefully documented. The wobblings and reversals of the court in its interpretations are analyzed. No straight thinking can be had on this subject without a knowledge of a few of these decisions. There is a terse review of the history of regulation as well as of the causes of its failure. We learn exactly what those vague terms "valuation," "reproduction cost," "fair return," and "due process of law," as applied to utility rates, mean in terms of millions of dollars taken illegally and unfairly from the pockets of the American people. And finally we learn what all this spells in terms of democratic government. The authors quote in this connection a warning made twenty years ago by Professor F. W. Taussig of Harvard: "It is not too much to say that the future of democracy will depend on its success in dealing with the problem of public ownership and regulation."

JUDSON KING

Important New Fiction

In next week's issue of The Nation *Joseph Wood Krutch will review Thomas Mann's "Joseph and His Brothers"; Dorothy Van Doren will review Evelyn Scott's "Breathe upon These Slain"; Louis Kronenberger will review Robert Cantwell's "The Land of Plenty"; Allen Tate will review T. S. Stribling's "Unfinished Cathedral."*

ANNA LOUISE STRONG

ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE MOSCOW DAILY NEWS

WILL accompany a group of ten on a 4½ weeks trip in the Soviet Union. Dominant trends will be studied in control centers such as Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Baku. The Soviet system in the lives of peasants and minor nationalities will be observed in the picturesque mountain regions of Dagestan and Georgia, the climax being a great folk festival on the slopes of Elbrus, highest peak in Europe.

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Shorter Notices

The Letters of Romain Rolland and Malwida von Meysenbug. Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

Readers of Romain Rolland's writings will be interested in these letters as a kind of portrait of the artist as a young man. And what a romantic and individualistic and potentially aristocratic young man Rolland seems. He has come a long way during his life, has stepped out of one literary period into another, for the hero of his last novel, "The Death of a World," faces toward Russia and communism. Rolland, it seems, might easily have held to the creed of art for art's sake. Such a creed was his heritage. But there was even in the youth in his early twenties a strong moral purpose. And gradually this youth saw that morality must be related to social backgrounds. In these letters to his much older friend (Malwida von Meysenbug was over seventy-four when he became her closest friend) Rolland is struggling, against the desires of his family, to find himself out, to determine, through travel, through the study of music and of art, his own artistic interests. There is no doubt whatever that he was greatly aided and fortified by this strange friendship with the woman who, all her life, had been the companion of artists. Malwida von Meysenbug had transcended age by choosing always to associate with youths of genius. Less than a year before Rolland met her she had lost the last of her great friends, Warsberg. She had known Wagner, Nietzsche, Herzen, Mazzini, Liszt. More than one tragedy of genius and much glory had been enacted in her drawing-rooms. By the time Rolland knew her, Malwida had built for herself a complete spiritual strength, an extremely idealistic detachment from the material world. She believed only in the soul, particularly in the souls of great men. It is interesting to speculate how this came about. We do not learn many facts about her earlier life. She writes to Rolland only to direct and stimulate him. But there is a curious fear in her that this young artist may fall so deeply in love with another woman that he will forsake the single search of the artist. Those letters written to him about Grazia, the young girl with whom he is in love, are

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almost the letters of a jealous woman. The serenity of Malwida's life seems, in these letters, to be pregnable. Altogether the correspondence is very interesting, for the complex psychology of both writers is laid open for dissection.

Films

Spring Miscellany

WHAT is perhaps most discouraging about the film industry—or the art of the cinema, if you like—in America at present is the persistence of the lag between its technical and what one might call its artistic evolution. Technically the screen has arrived at a smoothness of surface and articulation, an ingenuity in the exploitation of its resources, a sureness and elasticity of method, which might all be grouped together under the term sophistication. A simpler way of putting it perhaps would be to say that in the Hollywood film, even of the ranker variety, the bones no longer stick out through the soft and attenuated substance. As a medium or form it is now at least as developed and mature as either of the related forms of the novel or the naturalistic drama. Through their mastery of its possibilities certain recent directors have even, as has been suggested, made of it a very sophisticated form. But like certain young people whose anatomical development far exceeds their mental capacities the Hollywood film has not paralleled this sophistication of form with a corresponding sophistication of substance. Such an uneven evolution is always disturbing, and it is probably what is responsible for the peculiar state of confusion left by so many recent films. But the distinction just made may have a certain usefulness in preventing us from ignoring, in our disappointment with their failure to advance very much in the one direction, the very real improvement that they have shown in the other.

"Where Sinners Meet" (Radio City Music Hall) happens to be based on a comedy by A. A. Milne in which a certain delicate tinge of sophistication was already to be detected, and as such it does not offer a very good illustration of the disparity that has just been pointed out. All that it proves is that with a competent director, a cast made up of Diana Wynyard, Clive Brook, and Billie Burke, and an impeccably mounted English country-house background, an unenterprising Hollywood producer can make a second-rate English comedy just as amusing and second-rate on the screen as it was on the stage. There cannot even be the customary charges of distortion or vulgarization: the gossamer touch of J. M. Barrie's literary godson is preserved with virginal intactness. The objection that the cinema purist will make to this film, of course, will be concerned not so much with the quality as with the nature of its comedy—a comedy depending too much on epigrams, whimsicalities, purely verbal situations, and not nearly enough on movement, pantomime, and montage effects. In brief, whatever sophistication there is here is of the stage rather than the screen, and one suspects that on the stage it was not of the best.

Descending several rungs from the middle-brow to the distinctly lowbrow, however, one will find in "Murder in Trinidad," inspired by a recent detective thriller, a clean-cut example of the manner in which a picture can achieve a very real distinction of form without anything resembling the same distinction of subject matter. Admirably put together from the standpoint of such things as narrative organization, timing of climaxes, and the rest, it piles up its story of intrigue, contraband, and murder in the British colonial possession with an effect of portentousness worthy of a much more serious theme. Somewhat the same effectiveness, unsupported by any logic in the events or any other sort of logic, is accomplished in "The Black

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Cat," in which Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff move ominously through a series of gory episodes which do not bear the remotest correspondence to Poe's tale of the same title. A vague undifferentiated terror is created by the expressions on the faces of these two actors, the rather sinister contrast between the ultra-modern architecture and the graveyard atmosphere, and the usual generous jumble of sadistic elements. Much is promised—a Black Mass or Witch's Sabbath, for example—that is never adequately fulfilled; and the trouble finally turns out to be the failure of the script writers to make up their minds to follow through any one of the several stories with which they begin.

The same uncertainty is reflected on an even larger scale in "Sadie McKee," which, like "Rip-Tide" and several other recent films, would gain considerably in interest if the producers would not try for quite so many different kinds of interest in the same picture. Clarence Brown, working with Joan Crawford and Franchot Tone in the principal roles, does much with certain individual sequences: the whole situation between Sadie McKee, the virtuous small-town girl, and the drunken millionaire whom she marries for his money, is more terrible than is likely to be appreciated by the great public. But the picture as a whole is a rambling, absent-minded affair which merely serves to increase one's exasperation at the waste of so many resources and so many fine talents in Hollywood at the moment.

WILLIAM TROY

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